WILSON'S TALES OF THE BORDERS

HISTORICAL, TRADITIONARY & IMAGINATIVE


Edwin
Harris
his
BOOK
O for a Booke and a shadie Nook
eyther in a deep or cast;
with the green leaves whispering
overhead
Or the Streete eyves all about.
Where I may Reade all at my ease
Both of the Newe and Olde?
For a jollie goode Booke whereon to looke
Is better to me than Golde
EX
LIBRIS



THE VACANT CHAIR.





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WILLIAM ✿ MACKENZIE
LONDON GLASGOW & EDINBURGH

LEIGHTON SEL



WILSON'S

HISTORICAL, TRADITIONARY, AND IMAGINATIVE

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF

SCOTLAND;

WITH AN

Illustrative Glossary of the Scottish Dialect.

VOL. I.

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WILSON'S

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TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

You have all heard of the Cheviot mountains. If you have not, they are a rough, rugged, majestic chain of hills, which a poet might term the Roman wall of nature; crowned with snow, belted with storms, surrounded by pastures and fruitful fields, and still dividing the northern portion of Great Britain from the southern. With their proud summits piercing the clouds, and their dark rocky declivities frowning upon the glens below, they appear symbolical of the wild and untameable spirits of the Borderers who once inhabited their sides. We say, you have all heard of the Cheviots, and know them to be very high hills, like a huge clasp riveting England and Scotland together; but we are not aware that you may have heard of Marchlaw, an old, grey-looking farm-house, substantial as a modern fortress, recently, and, for aught we know to the contrary, still inhabited by Peter Elliot, the proprietor of some five hundred surrounding acres The boundaries of Peter's farm, indeed, were defined neither by fields, hedges, nor stone walls. A wooden stake here and a stone there, at considerable distances from each other, were the general landmarks; but neither Peter nor his neighbours considered a few acres worth quarrelling about; and their sheep frequently visited each other's pastures in a friendly way, harmoniously sharing a family dinner, in the same spirit as their masters made themselves free at each other's tables.

Peter was placed in very unpleasant circumstances, owing to the situation of Marchlaw House, which, unfortunately, was built immediately across the "ideal line," dividing the two kingdoms; and his misfortune was, that, being born within it, he knew not whether he was an Englishman or a Scotchman. He could trace his ancestral line no farther back than his great-grandfather, who, it appeared from the family Bible, had, together with his grandfather and father, claimed Marchlaw as their birth-place. They, however, were not involved in the same perplexities as their descendant. The parlour was distinctly acknowledged to be in Scotland, and two-thirds of the kitchen were as certainly allowed to be in England: his three ancestors were born in the room over the parlour, and, therefore, were Scotchmen beyond question; but Peter, unluckily, being brought into the world before the death of his grandfather, his parents occupied a room immediately over the debateable boundary line which crossed the kitchen. The room, though scarcely eight feet square, was evidently situated between the two countries; but, no one being able to ascertain what portion belonged to each, Peter, after many arguments and altercations upon the subject, was driven to the disagreeable alternative of confessing he knew not what countryman he was. What rendered the confession the more painful was, it was Peter's highest ambition to be thought a Scotchman. All his arable land lay on the Scotch side; his mother was collaterally related to the Stuarts; and few families were more ancient or respectable than the Elliots. Peter's speech, indeed, bewrayed him to be a walking partition between the two kingdoms, a living representation of the Union; for in one word he pronounced the letter *r* with the broad, masculine sound of the North Briton, and in the next with the liquid *burr* of the Northumbrians.

Peter, or, if you prefer it, Peter Elliot, Esquire, of March law, in the counties of Northumberland and Roxburgh, was, for many years, the best runner, leaper, and wrestler between Wooler and Jedburgh. Whirled from his hand, the ponderous bullet whizzed through the air like a pigeon on the wing; and the best putter on the Borders quailed from competition. As a feather in his grasp, he seized the unwieldy hammer, swept it round and round his head, accompanying with agile limb its evolutions, swiftly as swallows play around a circle. and hurled it from his hands like a shot from a rifle, till antagonists shrunk back, and the spectators burst into a shout. "Well done, Squire! the Squire for ever!" once exclaimed a servile observer of titles. "Squire! wha are ye squiring at?" returned Peter. "Confound ye! where was ye when I was christened Squire? My name's Peter Elliot—your man, or onybody's man, at whatever they like!"

Peter's soul was free, bounding, and buoyant, as the wind that carolled in a zephyr, or shouted in a hurricane, upon his native hills; and his body was thirteen stone of healthy substantial flesh, steeped in the spirits of life. He had been long married, but marriage had wrought no change upon him. They who suppose that wedlock tranforms the lark into an owl, offer an insult to the lovely beings who, brightening our darkest hours with the smiles of affection, teach us that that only is unbecoming in the husband which is disgraceful in the man. Nearly twenty years had passed over them; but Janet was still as kind, and, in his eyes, as beautiful, as when, bestowing on him her hand, she blushed her vows at the altar; and he was still as happy, as generous, and as free. Nine fair children sat around their domestic hearth, and one, the youngling of the flock, smiled upon its mother's knee. Peter had never known sorrow; he was blest in his wife, in his children, in his flocks. He ha become richer than his fathers. He was beloved by his neighbours, the tillers of his ground, and his herdsmen; yea, no man envied his prosperity. But a blight passed over the harvest of his joys, and gall was rained into the cup of his felicity.

It was Christmas-day, and a more melancholy-looking sun never rose on the 25th of December. One vast, sable cloud, like a universal pall, overspread the heavens. For weeks, the ground had been covered with clear, dazzling snow; and as throughout the day, the rain continued its unwearied and monotonous drizzle, the earth assumed a

character and appearance melancholy and troubled as the heavens. Like a mastiff that has lost its owner, the wind howled dolefully down the glens, and was re-echoed from the caves of the mountains, as the lamentations of a legion of invisible spirits. The frowning, snow-clad precipices were instinct with motion, as avalanche upon avalanche, the larger burying the less, crowded downward in their tremendous journey to the plain. The simple mountain rills had assumed the majesty of rivers; the broader streams were swollen into the wild torrent, and, gushing forth as cataracts, in fury and in foam, enveloped the valleys in an angry flood. But, at Marchlaw, the fire blazed blithely; the kitchen groaned beneath the load of preparations for a joyful feast; and glad faces glided from room to room.

Peter Elliot kept Christmas, not so much because it was Christmas, as in honour of its being the birthday of Thomas, his first-born, who, that day, entered his nineteenth year. With a father's love, his heart yearned for all his children; but Thomas was the pride of his eyes. Cards of apology had not then found their way among our Border hills; and, as all knew that, although Peter admitted no spirits within his threshold, nor a drunkard at his table, he was, nevertheless, no niggard in his hospitality, his invitations were accepted without ceremony. The guests were assembled; and the kitchen being the only apartment in the building large enough to contain them, the cloth was spread upon a long, clear, oaken table, stretching from England into Scotland. On the English end of the board were placed a ponderous plum-pudding, studded with temptation, and a smoking sir loin; on Scotland, a savoury and well-seasoned haggis, with a sheep's-head and trotters; while the intermediate space was filled with the good things of this life, common to both kingdoms and to the season.

The guests from the north, and from the south, were arranged promiscuously. Every seat was filled—save one. The chair by Peter's right hand remained unoccupied. He had raised his hands before his eyes, and besought a blessing on what was placed before them, and was preparing to carve for his visiters, when his eyes fell upon the vacant chair. The knife dropped upon the table. Anxiety flashed across his countenance, like an arrow from an unseen hand.

"Janet, where is Thomas?" he inquired; "hae nane o' ye seen him?" and, without waiting an answer, he continued—"How is it possible he can be absent at a time like this? And on such a day, too? Excuse me a minute, friends, till I just step out and see if I can find him. Since ever I kept this day, as mony o' ye ken, he has always been at my right hand, in that very chair; and I canna think o' beginning our dinner while I see it empty."

"If the filling of the chair be all," said a pert young sheep-farmer, named Johnson, "I will step into it till Master Thomas arrive."

"Ye're not a faither, young man," said Peter, and walked out of the room.

Minute succeeded minute, but Peter returned not. The guests became hungry, peevish, and gloomy, while an excellent dinner continued spoiling before them. Mrs Elliot, whose good-nature was the most prominent feature in her character, strove, by every possible effort, to beguile the unpleasant impressions she perceived gathering upon their countenances.

"Peter is just as bad as him," she remarked, "to hae gane to seek him when he kenned the dinner wouldna keep. And I'm sure Thomas kenned it would be ready at one o'clock to a minute. It's sae unthinking and unfriendly like to keep folk waiting." And, endeavouring to smile upon a beautiful black-haired girl of seventeen, who sat by her elbow, she continued, in an anxious whisper—"Did ye see naething o' him, Elizabeth, hinny?"

The maiden blushed deeply; the question evidently gave freedom to a tear, which had, for some time, been an unwilling prisoner in the brightest eyes in the room; and the monosyllable, "No," that trembled from her lips, was audible only to the ear of the inquirer. In vain Mrs Elliot despatched one of her children after another, in quest of their father and brother; they came and went, but brought no tidings more cheering than the moaning of the hollow wind. Minutes rolled into hours, yet neither came. She perceived the prouder of her guests preparing to withdraw, and, observing that "Thomas's absence was so singular and unaccountable, and so unlike either him or his faither, she didna ken what apology to make to her friends for such treatment; but it was needless waiting, and begged they would use no ceremony, but just begin."

No second invitation was necessary. Good humour appeared to be restored, and sirloins, pies, pasties, and moor-fowl, began to disappear like the lost son. For a moment, Mrs Elliot apparently partook in the restoration of cheerfulness; but a low sigh at her elbow again drove the colour from her rosy cheeks. Her eye wandered to the farther end of the table, and rested on the unoccupied seat of her husband, and the vacant chair of her first-born. Her heart fell heavily within her; all the mother gushed into her bosom; and, rising from the table, "What in the world can be the meaning o' this?" said she, as she hurried, with a troubled countenance, towards the door. Her husband met her on the threshold.

"Where hae ye been, Peter?" said she, eagerly; "hae ye seen naething o' him?"

"Naething! naething!" replied he; "is he no cast up yet?" And, with a melancholy glance, his eyes sought an answer in the deserted chair. His lips quivered, his tongue faltered.

"Gude forgie me!" said he; "and such a day for even an enemy to be out in! I've been up and doun every way that I can think on, but not a living creature has seen or heard tell o' him. Ye'll excuse me, neebors," he added, leaving the house; "I must awa again, for I canna rest."

"I ken by mysel', friends," said Adam Bell, a decent-looking Northumbrian, "that a faither's heart is as sensitive as the apple o' his e'e; and, I think we would shew a want o' natural sympathy and respect for our worthy neighbour, if we didna every one get his foot into the stirrup, without loss o' time, and assist him in his search. For, in my rough, country way o' thinking, it must be something particularly out o' the common that could tempt Thomas to be amissing. Indeed, I needna say *tempt*, for there could be no inclination in the way. And our hills," he concluded, in a lower tone, "are not ower chancy in other respects, besides the breaking up o' the storm."

"Oh!" said Mrs Elliot, wringing her hands, "I have had the coming o' this about me for days and days. My head was growing dizzy with happiness, but thoughts came stealing upon me like ghosts, and I felt a lonely soughing about my heart, without being able to tell the cause; but the cause is come at last! And my dear Thomas—the very pride and staff o' my life—is lost!—lost to me for ever!"

"I ken, Mrs Elliot," replied the Northumbrian, "it is an easy matter to say compose yourself, for them that dinna ken what it is to feel. But, at the same time, in our plain, country way o' thinking, we are always ready to believe the worst. I've often heard my faither say, and I've as often remarked it myself, that, before anything happens to a body, there is *a something* comes owre them, like a cloud before the face o' the sun; a sort o' dumb whispering about the breast from the other world. And, though I trust there is naething o' the kind in your case, yet, as you observe, when I find myself growing dizzy, as it were, with happiness, it makes good a saying o' my mother's, poor body! 'Bairns, bairns,' she used to say, 'there is owre muckle singing in your heads to-night; we will have a shower before bed-time.' And I never, in my born days, saw it fail."

At any other period, Mr Bell's dissertation on presentiments would have been found a fitting text on which to hang all the dreams, wraiths, warnings, and marvellous circumstances, that had been handed down to the company from the days of their grandfathers; but, in the present instance, they were too much occupied in consultation regarding the different routes to be taken in their search.

Twelve horsemen, and some half-dozen pedestrians, were seen hurrying in divers directions from Marchlaw, as the last faint lights of a melancholy day were yielding to the heavy darkness which appeared pressing in solid masses down the sides of the mountains. The wives and daughters of the party were alone left with the disconsolate mother, who alternately pressed her weeping children to her heart, and told them to weep not, for their brother would soon return; while the tears stole down her own cheeks, and the infant in her arms wept because its mother wept. Her friends strove with each other to inspire hope, and poured upon her ear their mingled and loquacious consolation. But one remained silent. The daughter of Adam Bell, who sat by Mrs Elliot's elbow at table, had shrunk into an obscure corner of the room. Before her face she held a handkerchief wet with tears. Her bosom throbbed convulsively; and, as occasionally her broken sighs burst from their prison-house, a significant whisper passed among the younger part of the company.

Mrs Elliot approached her, and taking her hand tenderly within both of hers—"O hinny! hinny!" said she, "yer sighs gae through my heart like a knife! An' what can I do to comfort ye? Come, Elizabeth, my bonny love, let us hope for the best. Ye see before ye a sorrowin' mother!—a mother that fondly hoped to see you an'—I canna say it!—an' am ill qualified to gie comfort, when my own heart is like a furnace! But, oh! let us try and remember the blessed portion, 'Whom the LORD loveth HE chasteneth,' an' inwardly pray for strength to say, 'His will be done!'"

Time stole on towards midnight, and one by one the unsuccessful party returned. As foot after foot approached, every breath was held to listen. "No, no, no!" cried the mother, again and again, with increasing anguish, "it's no the foot o' my ain bairn;" while her keen gaze still remained riveted upon the door, and was not withdrawn, nor the hope of despair relinquished, till the individual entered, and, with a silent and ominous shake of his head, betokened his fruitless efforts. The clock had struck twelve; all were returned save the father. The wind howled more wildly; the rain poured upon the windows in ceaseless torrents; and the roaring of the mountain rivers gave a character of deeper ghostliness to their sepulchral silence; for they sat, each rapt in forebodings, listening to the storm; and no sounds were heard, save the groans of the mother, the weeping of her children, and the bitter and broken sobs of the bereaved maiden, who leaned her head upon her father's bosom, refusing to be comforted.

At length, the barking of the farm-dog announced footsteps at a distance. Every ear was raised to listen, every eye turned to the door; but, before the tread was yet audible to the listeners—"Oh, it is only Peter's foot!" said the miserable mother, and, weeping, arose to meet him.

"Janet! Janet!" he exclaimed, as he entered, and threw his arms around her neck, "what's this come upon us at last?"

He cast an inquisitive glance around his dwelling, and a convulsive shiver passed over his manly frame, as his eye again fell on the vacant chair, which no one had ventured to occupy. Hour succeeded hour, but the company separated not; and low, sorrowful whispers mingled with the lamentations of the parents.

"Neighbours," said Adam Bell, "tne morn is a new day, and we will wait to see what it may bring forth; but, in the meantime, let us read a portion o' the Divine word, an kneel together in prayer, that, whether or not the day-dawn cause light to shine upon this singular bereavement, the Sun o' Righteousness may arise wi' healing on his wings, upon the hearts o' this afflicted family, an' upon the hearts o' all present."

"Amen!" responded Peter, wringing his hands; and his friend, taking down the Ha' Bible, read the chapter wherein it is written—"It is better to be in the house of mourning than in the house of feasting;" and again the portion which sayeth—"It is well for me that I have been afflicted, for before I was afflicted, I went astray."

The morning came, but brought no tidings of the lost son. After a solemn farewell, all the visitants, save Adam Bell and his daughter, returned every one to their own house; and the disconsolate father, with his servants, again renewed their search among the hills and surrounding villages.

Days, weeks, months, and years, rolled on. Time had subdued the anguish of the parents into a holy calm; but their lost first-born was not forgotten, although no trace of his fate had been discovered. The general belief was, that he had perished on the breaking up of the snow; and the few in whose remembrance he still lived, merely spoke of his death as a "very extraordinary circumstance," remarking that "he was a wild, venturesome sort o lad."

Christmas had succeeded Christmas, and Peter Elliot still kept it in commemoration of the birthday of him who was not. For the first few years after the loss of their son, sadness and silence characterised the party who sat down to dinner at Marchlaw, and still at Peter's right hand was placed the vacant chair. But, as the younger branches of the family advanced in years, the remembrance of their brother became less poignant. Christmas was, with all around them, a day of rejoicing, and they began to make merry with their friends; while their parents partook in their enjoyment, with a smile, half of approval and half of sorrow.

Twelve years had passed away; Christmas had again come. It was the counterpart of its fatal predecessor. The hills had not yet cast off their summer verdure; the sun, although shorn of its heat, had lost none of its brightness or glory, and looked down upon the earth as though participating in its gladness; and the clear blue sky was tranquil as the sea sleeping beneath the moon. Many visiters had again assembled at Marchlaw. The sons of Mr Elliot, and the young men of the party, were assembled upon a level green near the house, amusing themselves with throwing the hammer and other Border games, while himself and the elder guests stood by as spectators, recounting the deeds of their youth. Johnson, the sheep farmer, whom we have already mentioned, now a brawny and gigantic fellow of two-and-thirty, bore away in every game the palm from all competitors. More than once, as Peter beheld his sons defeated, he felt the spirit of youth glowing in his veins, and, "Oh!" muttered he, in bitterness, "had my Thomas been spared to me, he would hae thrown his heart's bluid after the hammer, before he would hae been beat by e'er a Johnson in the country!"

While he thus soliloquized, and with difficulty restrained an impulse to compete with the victor himself, a dark, foreign-looking, strong-built seaman, unceremoniously approached, and, with his arms folded, cast a look of contempt upon the boasting conqueror. Every eye was turned with a scrutinizing glance upon the stranger. In height he could not exceed five feet nine, but his whole frame was the model of muscular strength; his features were open and manly, but deeply sunburnt and weather-beaten; his long, glossy, black hair, curled into ringlets by the breeze and the billow, fell thickly over his temples and forehead; and whiskers of a similar hue, more conspicuous for size than

elegance, gave a character of fierceness to a countenance otherwise possessing a striking impress of manly beauty. Without asking permission, he stepped forward, lifted the hammer, and, swinging it around his head, hurled it upwards of five yards beyond Johnson's most successful throw. "Well done!" shouted the astonished spectators. The heart of Peter Elliot warmed within him, and he was hurrying forward to grasp the stranger by the hand, when the words groaned in his throat, "It was just such a throw as my Thomas would have made!—my own lost Thomas!" The tears burst into his eyes, and, without speaking, he turned back, and hurried towards the house, to conceal his emotion.

Successively, at every game, the stranger had defeated all who ventured to oppose him; when a messenger announced that dinner waited their arrival. Some of the guests were already seated, others entering; and, as heretofore, placed beside Mrs Elliot, was Elizabeth Bell, still in the noontide of her beauty; but sorrow had passed over her features, like a veil before the countenance of an angel. Johnson, crest-fallen and out of humour at his defeat, seated himself by her side. In early life, he had regarded Thomas Elliot as a rival for her affections; and, stimulated by the knowledge that Adam Bell would be able to bestow several thousands upon his daughter for a dowry, he yet prosecuted his attentions with unabated assiduity, in despite of the daughter's aversion and the coldness of her father. Peter had taken his place at the table; and still by his side, unoccupied and sacred, appeared the vacant chair, the chair of his first-born, whereon none had sat since his mysterious death or disappearance.

"Bairns," said he, "did nane o' ye ask the sailor to come up and tak a bit o' dinner wi' us?"

"We were afraid it might lead to a quarrel with Mr Johnson," whispered one of the sons.

"He is come without asking," replied the stranger, entering; "and the wind shall blow from a new point if I destroy the mirth or happiness of the company."

"Ye're a stranger, young man," said Peter "or ye would ken this is no a meeting o' mirth-makers. But, I assure ye, ye are welcome, heartily welcome. Haste ye, lassies," he added to the servants; "some o' ye get a chair for the gentleman."

"Gentleman, indeed!" muttered Johnson between his teeth.

"Never mind about a chair, my hearties," said the seaman; "this will do!" And, before Peter could speak to withhold him, he had thrown himself carelessly into the hallowed, the venerated, the twelve-years-unoccupied chair! The spirit of sacrilege uttering blasphemies from a pulpit could not have smitten a congregation of pious worshippers with deeper horror and consternation, than did this filling of the vacant chair the inhabitants of Marchlaw.

"Excuse me, Sir! excuse me, Sir!" said Peter, the words trembling upon his tongue; "but ye cannot—ye cannot sit there!"

"O man! man!" cried Mrs Elliot, "get out o that! get out o' that!—take my chair!—take ony chair i' the house!—but dinna, dinna sit there! It has never been sat in by mortal being since the death o' my dear bairn!—and to see it filled by another is a thing I canna endure!"

"Sir! Sir!" continued the father, "ye have done it through ignorance, and we excuse ye. But that was my Thomas's seat! Twelve years this very day—his birthday—he perished, Heaven kens how! He went out from our sight, like the cloud that passes over the hills—never—never to return. And, Sir, spare a faither's feelings! for to see it filled wrings the blood from my heart!"

"Give me your hand, my worthy soul!" exclaimed the seaman; "I revere—nay, hang it! I would die for your feelings! But Tom Elliot was my friend, and I cast anchor in this chair by special commission. I know that a sudden broadside of joy is a bad thing; but, as I don't know how to preach a sermon before telling you, all I have to say is—that Tom an't dead."

"Not dead!" said Peter, grasping the hand of the stranger, and speaking with an eagerness that almost choked his utterance; "O Sir! Sir! tell me how!—how!—Did ye say, living?—Is my ain Thomas living?"

"Not dead, do ye say?" cried Mrs Elliot, hurrying towards him and grasping his other hand—"not dead! And shall I see my bairn again? Oh! may the blessing o' Heaven, and the blessing o' a broken-hearted mother be upon the bearer o' the gracious tidings! But tell me—tell me, how is it possible! As ye would expect happiness here or hereafter, dinna, dinna deceive me!"

"Deceive you!" returned the stranger, grasping, with impassioned earnestness, their hands in his—"Never!—never! and all I can say is—Tom Elliot is alive and hearty."

"No, no!" said Elizabeth, rising from her seat, "he does not deceive us; there is that in his countenance which bespeaks a falsehood impossible." And she also endeavoured to move towards him, when Johnson threw his arm around her to withhold her.

"Hands off, you land-lubber!" exclaimed the seaman, springing towards them, "or, shiver me! I'll shew daylight through your timbers in the turning of a handspike!" And, clasping the lovely girl in his arms, "Betty! Betty, my love!" he cried, "don't you know your own Tom? Father, mother, don't you know me? Have you really forgot your own son? If twelve years have made some change on his face, his heart is sound as ever."

His father, his mother, and his brothers, clung around him, weeping, smiling, and mingling a hundred questions together. He threw his arms around the neck of each, and in answer to their inquiries, replied—"Well! well! there is time enough to answer questions, but not to-day—not to-day!"

"No, my bairn," said his mother, we'll ask you no questions—nobody shall ask ye any! But how—how were ye torn away from us, my love? And, O hinny! where—where hae ye been?"

"It is a long story, mother," said he, "and would take a week to tell it. But, howsoever, to make a long story short, you remember when the smugglers were pursued, and wished to conceal their brandy in our house, my father prevented them; they left muttering revenge—and they have been revenged. This day twelve years, I went out with the intention of meeting Elizabeth and her father, when I came upon a party of the gang concealed in Hell's Hole. In a moment half a dozen pistols were held to my breast, and, tying my hands to my sides, they dragged me into the cavern. Here I had not been long their prisoner, when the snow, rolling down the mountains, almost totally blocked up its mouth. On the second night, they cut through the snow, and, hurrying me along with them, I was bound to a horse, between two, and, before day-light, found myself stowed like a piece of old junk, in the hold of a smuggling lugger, Within a week, I was shipped on board a Dutch man-of-war; and for six years was kept dogging about on different stations, till our old yawing hulk received orders to join the fleet which was to fight against the gallant Duncan at Camperdown. To think of fighting against my own countrymen, my own flesh and blood, was worse than to be cut to pieces by a cat-o'-nine tails; and, under cover of the smoke of the first broadside, I sprang upon the gunwale, plunged into the sea, and swam for the English fleet. Never, never shall I forget the moment that my feet first trod upon the deck of a British frigate! My nerves felt as firm as her oak, and my heart free as the pennant that waved defiance from her mast-head! I was as active as any one during the battle; and, when it was over, and I found myself again among my own country-

men and all speaking my own language, I fancied—nay, hang it! I almost believed—I should meet my father, my mother, or my dear Bess, on board of the British frigate. I expected to see you all again in a few weeks at farthest; but, instead of returning to Old England before I was aware, I found it was helm about with us. As to writing, I never had an opportunity but once. We were anchored before a French fort; a packet was lying alongside ready to sail; I had half a side written, and was scratching my head to think how I should come over writing about you, Bess, my love, when, as bad luck would have it, our lieutenant comes to me, and says he, 'Elliot,' says he, 'I know you like a little smart service; come, my lad, take the head oar, while we board some of those French bum-boats under the batteries!' I could'nt say no. We pulled ashore, made a bonfire of one of their craft, and were setting fire to a second, when a deadly shower of small-shot from the garrison scuttled our boat, killed our commanding officer with half of the crew, and the few who were left of us were made prisoners. It is of no use bothering you by telling how we escaped from French prison. We did escape; and Tom will once more fill his vacant chair."

Should any of our readers wish farther acquaintance with our friends; all we can say is, the new year was still young when Adam Bell bestowed his daughter's hand upon the heir of Marchlaw, and Peter beheld the once vacant chair again occupied, and a namesake of the third generation prattling on his knee.

TIBBY FOWLER

"Tibby Fowler o the glen,
A' the lads are wooin' at her."—*Old Song.*

All our readers have heard and sung of "Tibby Fowler o' the glen;" but they may not all be aware that the glen referred to lies within about four miles of Berwick. No one has seen and not admired the romantic amphitheatre below Edrington Castle, through which the Whitadder coils like a beautiful serpent glittering in the sun, and sports in fantastic curves beneath the pasture-clad hills—the grey ruin—the mossy and precipitous crag—and the pyramid of woods, whose branches, meeting from either side, bend down and kiss the glittering river, till its waters seem lost in their leafy bosom. Now, gentle reader, if you have looked upon the scene we have described, we shall make plain to you the situation of Tibby Fowler's cottage, by a homely map, which is generally *at hand*. You have only to bend your arm, and suppose your shoulder to represent Edrington Castle, your hand Clarabad, and near the elbow you will have the spot where "ten cam' rowing' owre the water;" a little nearer to Clarabad, is the "lang dyke side," and immediately at the foot of it is the site of Tibby's cottage, which stood upon the Edrington side of the river; and a little to the west of the cottage, you will find a shadowy row of palm trees, planted, as tradition testifieth, by the hands of Tibby's father—old Ned Fowler, of whom many speak until this day. The locality of the song was known to many; and, if any should be inclined to inquire how we became acquainted with the other particulars of our story, we have only to reply, that that belongs to a class of questions to which we do not return an answer. There is no necessity for a writer of tales taking for his motto—*vitem impendere vero*. Tibby's parents had the character of being "bien bodies;" and, together with their own savings, and a legacy that had been left them by a relative, they were enabled, at their death, to leave their daughter in possession of five hundred pounds. This was esteemed a fortune in those days, and would afford a very respectable foundation for the rearing of one vet. Tibby, however, was left an orphan, as well as the sole mistress of five hundred pounds, and the proprietor of a neat and well furnished cottage, with a piece of land adjoining, before she had completed her nineteenth year; and when we add, that she had hair like the raven's wings when the sun glances upon them, cheeks where the lily and the rose seemed to have lent their most delicate hues, and eyes like twin dew-drops glistening beneath a summer moonbeam, with a waist and an arm rounded like a model for a sculptor, it is not to be wondered at that "a' the lads cam wooin' at her." But she had a woman's heart as well as woman's beauty and the portion of an heiress. She found her cottag surrounded, and her path beset, by a herd of grovelling, pounds, shillings, and pence hunters, whom her very soul loathed. The sneaking wretches, who profaned the name of lovers, seemed to have *money* written on their very eyeballs and the sighs they professed to heave in her presence sounded to her like stifled groans of—*your gold—your gold!* She did not hate them, but she despised their meanness; and, as they one by one gave up persecuting her with their addresses, they consoled themselves with retorting upon her the words of the adage, that—"her *pride* would have a fall!" But it was not from pride that she rejected them; but because her heart was capable of love—of love, pure, devoted, unchangeable, springing from being beloved; and because her feelings were sensitive as the quivering aspen, which trembles at the rustling of an insect's wing. Amongst her suitors there might have been some who were disinterested, but the meanness and sordid objects of many caused her to regard all with suspicion; and there was none among the number to whose voice her bosom responded as the needle turns to the magnet, and frequently from a cause as inexplicable. She had resolved that the man to whom she gave her hand should wed her for herself—and for herself only. Her parents had died in the same month; and, about a year after their death, she sold the cottage and the piece of ground, and took her journey towards Edinburgh, where the report of her being a "great fortune," as her neighbours termed her, might be unknown. But Tibby, although a sensitive girl, was also, in many respects, a prudent one. Frequently she had heard her mother, when she had to take but a shilling from the legacy, quote the proverb—that it was

"Like a cow in a clout,
That soon wears out."

Proverbs, we know, are in bad taste, but we quote it, because by its repetition, the mother produced a deeper impression on her daughter's mind than could have been effected by a volume of sentiment. Bearing, therefore, in her memory the maxim of her frugal parent, Tibby deposited her money in the only bank, we believe, that was at that period in the Scottish capital, and hired herself as a child's-maid in the family of a gentleman who occupied a house in the neighbourhood of Restalrig. Here the story of her fortune was unknown, and Tibby was distinguished only for a kind heart and a lovely countenance. It was during the summer months and Leith Links became her daily resort, and there she was wont to walk, with a child in her arms, and another leading by the hand, for there she could wander by the side of the sounding sea, and her heart still glowed for her father's cottage and its fairy glen, where she had often heard the voice of its deep waters; and she felt the sensation which, we believe may have been experienced by many who have been born within hearing of old ocean's roar—that, wherever they may be, they hear the murmur of its billows as the voice of a youthful friend; and she almost fancied, as she approached the sea that she drew nearer the home which sheltered her infancy. She had been but a few weeks in the family we have alluded to, when, returning from her accustomed walk, her eyes met those of a young man habited as a seaman. He appeared to be about five-and-twenty, and his features were rather manly than handsome. There was a dash of

boldness and confidence in his countenance; but, as the eyes of the maiden met his, he turned aside as if abashed, and passed on. Tibby blushed at her foolishness—but she could not help it, she felt interested in the stranger. There was an expression—a language—an inquiry in his gaze, she had never witnessed before. She would have turned round to cast a look after him, but she blushed deeper at the thought, and modesty forbade it. She walked on for a few minutes, upbraiding herself for entertaining the silly wish, when the child, who walked by her side, fell a few yards behind. She turned round to call him by his name—Tibby was certain that she had no motive but to call the child; and, though she did steal a sidelong glance towards the spot where she had passed the stranger, it was a mere accident—it could not be avoided—at least, so the maiden wished to persuade her conscience against her conviction; but that glance revealed to her the young sailor, not pursuing the path on which she had met him, but following her within the distance of a few yards; and, until she reached her master's door she heard the sound of his footsteps behind her. She experienced an emotion between being pleased and offended at his conduct, though, we suspect, the former eventually predominated; for the next day she was upon the Links as usual, and there also was the young seaman, and again he followed her to within sight of her master's house. How long this sort of dumb love-making, or the pleasures of diffidence, continued, we cannot tell. Certain it is that at length he spoke, wooed, and conquered; and, about a twelvemonth after their first meeting, Tibby Fowler became the wife of William Gordon, the mate of a foreign trader. On the second week after their marriage, William was to sail upon a long, long voyage, and might not be expected to return for more than twelve months. This was a severe trial for poor Tibby, and she felt as if she would not be able to stand up against it. As yet her husband knew nothing of her dowry; and for this hour she had reserved its discovery. A few days before their marriage she had lifted her money from the bank and deposited it in her chest.

"No, Willie—my ain Willie," she cried, "ye maunna—ye winna leave me already: I have neither faither, mother, brother, nor kindred—naebody but you, Willie—only you in the wide world; and I am a stranger here, and ye winna leave your Tibby. Say that ye winna, Willie." And she wrung his hand, gazed in his face, and wept.

"I maun gang, dearest—I maun gang," said Willie, and pressed her to his breast—"but the thocht o' my ain wifie will mak the months chase ane anither like the moon driving shadows owre the sea. There's nae danger in the voyage, hinny—no a grain o' danger—sae dinna greet—but come kiss me, Tibby, and, when I come hame, I'll mak ye leddy o' them a'."

"O no, no, Willie!" she replied; "I want to be nae leddy—I want naething but my Willie. Only say that ye'll no gang; and here's something here—something for ye to look at." And she hurried to her chest, and took from it a large leathern pocketbook that had been her father's, and which contained her treasure, now amounting to somewhat more than six hundred pounds. In a moment she returned to her husband; she threw her arms around his neck; she thrust the pocketbook into his bosom. "There, Willie—there," she exclaimed; "that is yours—my faither placed it in my hand wi' a blessing, and wi' the same blessing I transfer it to you—but dinna, dinna leave me. Thus saying, she hurried out of the room. We will not attempt to describe the astonishment—we may say the joy of the fond husband—on opening the pocketbook and finding the unlooked-for dowry However intensely a man may love a woman, there is little chance that her putting an unexpected portion of six hundred pounds into his hands will diminish his attachment; nor did it diminish that of William Gordon. He relinquished his intention of proceeding on the foreign voyage, and purchased a small coasting vessel, of which he was both owner and commander. Five years of unclouded prosperity passed over them, and Tibby had become the mother of three fair children. William sold his small vessel and purchased a larger one; and, in fitting it up, all the gains of his five successful years were swallowed up. But trade was good. She was a beautiful brig, and he had her called the "*Tibby Fowler.*" He now took a fond farewell of his wife and little ones, upon a foreign voyage, which was not calculated to exceed four months, and which held out high promise of advantage. But four, eight, twelve months passed away, and there were no tidings of the "*Tibb Fowler.*" Britain was then at war; there were enemies ships and pirates upon the sea, and there had been fierce storms and hurricanes since her husband left; and Tibby thought of all these things and wept; and her lisping children asked her when their father would return, for he had promised presents to all, and she answered—to-morrow—and to-morrow; and turned from them and wept again. She began to be in want; and, at first, she received assistance from some of the friends of their prosperity; but all hope of her husband's return was now abandoned, the ship was not insured, and the mother and her family were reduced to beggary. In order to support them, she sold one article of furniture after another, until what remained was seized by the landlord in security for his rent. It was then that Tibby and her children, with scarce a blanket to cover them, were cast friendless upon the streets—to die or to beg. To the last resource she could not yet stoop; and, from the remnants of former friendship, she was furnished with a basket and a few trifling wares, with which, with her children by her side, she set out, with a broken and a sorrowful heart wandering from village to village. She had travelled in this manner for some months, when she drew near her native glen; and the cottage that had been her father's—that had been her own—stood before her. She had travelled all the day and sold nothing. Her children were pulling by her tattered gown, weeping and crying—"Bread!—mother, give us bread!" and her own heart was sick with hunger.

"Oh, wheesht, my darlings! wheesht!" she exclaimed, and she fell upon her knees, and threw her arms round the necks of all the three; "you will get bread soon—the Almighty will not permit my bairns to perish—no! no!—ye shall have bread."

In despair she hurried to the cottage of her birth. The door was opened by one who had been a rejected suitor He gazed upon her intently for a few seconds—and she was still young, being scarce more than six and twenty, and, in the midst of her wretchedness, yet lovely.

"Gude gracious, Tibby Fowler!" he exclaimed, "is that you? Poor creature, are ye seeking charity? Weel, I think ye'll mind what I said to you, now—that your pride would have a fa'!"

While the heartless owner of the cottage yet spoke, a voice behind her was heard exclaiming—"It is her!—it is her!—my ain Tibby and her bairns!"

At the well-known voice, Tibby uttered a wild scream of joy, and fell senseless on the earth; but the next moment her husband, William Gordon, raised her to his breast. Three weeks before, he had returned to Britain, and traced her from village to village, till he found her in the midst of their children, on the threshold of the place of her nativity. His story we need not here tell. He had fallen into the hands of the enemy—he had been retained for months on board of their vessel—and, when a storm had arisen, and hope was gone, he had saved her from being lost and her crew from perishing. In reward for his services, his own vessel had been restored to him, and he was returned to his country, after an absence of eighteen months, richer than when he left and laden with honours. The rest is soon

told. After Tibby and her husband had wept upon each other's neck, and he had kissed his children, and again their mother, with his youngest child on one arm, and his wife resting on the other, he hastened from the spot that had been the scene of such bitterness and transport. In a few years more, William Gordon having obtained a competency, they re-purchased the cottage in the glen, where Tibby Fowler lived to see her children's children, and died at a good old age in the house in which she had been born —the remains of which, we have only to add, for the edification of the curious, may be seen until this day.

MY BLACK COAT;

OR,

THE BREAKING OF THE BRIDE'S CHINA.

Gentle reader, the simple circumstances I am about to relate to you, hang upon what is termed—*a bad omen.* There are few amongst the uneducated who have not a degree of faith in omens; and even amongst the better educated and well informed, there are many who, while they profess to disbelieve them, and, indeed, do disbelieve them, yet *feel* them in their hours of solitude. I have known individuals who, in the hour of danger, would have braved the cannon's mouth, or defied death to his teeth, who, nevertheless, would have buried their head in the bedclothes at the howling of a dog at midnight, or spent a sleepless night from hearing the tick, tick, of the spider, or the untiring song of the kitchen-fire musician—the jolly little cricket. The age of omens, however, is drawing to a close: for Truth in its progress is trampling delusion of every kind under its feet; yet, after all, though a belief in omens is a superstition, it is one that carries with it a portion of the poetry of our nature. But to proceed with our story.

Several years ago, I was on my way from B—— to Edinburgh; and being as familiar with every cottage, tree, shrub, and whin-bush on the Dunbar and Lauder roads, as with the face of an acquaintance, I made choice of the less frequented path by Longformacus. I always took a secret pleasure in contemplating the dreariness of wild spreading desolation; and, next to looking on the sea when its waves dance to the music of a hurricane, I loved to gaze upon the heath-covered wilderness, where the blue horizon only girded its purple bosom. It was no season to look upon the heath in the beauty of barrenness, yet I purposely diverged from the main road. About an hour, therefore, after I had descended from the region of the Lammermoors, and entered the Lothians, I became sensible I was pursuing a path which was not forwarding my footsteps to Edinburgh. It was December; the sun had just gone down; I was not very partial t travelling in darkness, neither did I wish to trust to chance for finding a comfortable restingplace for the night. Perceiving a farm-steading and water-mill about a quarter of a mile from the road, I resolved to turn towards them, and make inquiry respecting the right path, or, at least, to request to be directed to the nearest inn.

The "town," as the three or four houses and mill were called, was all bustle and confusion. The female inhabitants were cleaning and scouring, and running to and fro. I quickly learned that all this note of preparation arose from the "maister" being to be married within three days. Seeing me a stranger, he came from his house towards me. He was a tall, stout, good-looking, jolly-faced farmer and miller. His manner of accosting me partook more of kindliness than civility; and his inquiries were not free from the familiar, prying curiosity which prevails in every corner of our island, and, I must say, in the north in particular.

"Where do you come fra, na—if it be a fair question?" inquired he.

"From B——" was the brief and merely civil reply.

"An' hae ye come frae there the day?" he continued.

"Yes," was the answer.

"Ay, man, an' ye come frae B——, do ye?" added he, "then, nae doot, ye'll ken a person they ca' Mr ——?"

"Did he come originally from Dunse?" returned I, mentioning also the occupation of the person referred to.

"The very same," rejoined the miller; "are ye acquainted wi' him. Sir?"

"I ought to be," replied I; "the person you speak of is merely my father."

"Your faither!" exclaimed he, opening his mouth and eyes to their full width, and standing for a moment the picture of surprise—"Gude gracious! ye dinna say sae!—is he really your faither? Losh, man, do you no ken, then, that I'm your cousin! Ye've heard o' your cousin, Willie Stewart."

"Fifty times," replied I.

"Weel, I'm the vera man," said he—"Gie's your hand; for, 'odsake man, I'm as glad as glad can be. This is real extraordinar. I've often heard o' you—it will be you that writes the buiks—faith ye'll be able to mak something o' this. But come awa into the house—ye dinna stir a mile far'er for a week, at ony rate."

So saying, and still grasping my hand, he led me to the farm-house. On crossing the threshold—

"Here, lassie," he cried, in a voice that made roof and rafters ring, "bring ben the speerits, and get on the kettle —here's a cousin that I ne'er saw in my life afore."

A few minutes served mutually to confirm and explain our newly discovered relationship.

"Man," said he, as we were filling a second glass, "ye've just come in the very nick o' time; an' I'll tell ye how. Ye see I am gaun to be married the day after the morn; an' no hacin' a friend o' ony kin-kind in this quarter, I had to ask an acquaintance to be the best man. Now, this was vexin' me mair than ye can think, particularly, ye see, because the sweetheart has aye been hinting to me that it wadna be lucky for me no to hae a bluid relation for a best man. For that matter, indeed, luck here, luck there, I no care the toss up o' a ha'penny about omens mysel'; but now that ye've fortunately come, I'm a great deal easier, an' it will be ae craik out o' the way, for it will please her; an' ye may guess, between you an' me, that she's worth the pleasin', or I wadna had her; so I'll just step ower an' tell the ither lad that I hae a cousin come to be my best man, an' he'll think nacthing o't."

On the morning of the third day, the bride and her friends arrived. She was the only child of a Lammermoor farmer, and was in truth a real mountain flower—a heath blossom; for the rude health that laughed upon her cheeks approached nearer the hue of the heather-bell, than the rose and vermilion of which poets speak. She was comely withal, possessing an appearance of considerable strength, and was rather above the middle size—in short, she was the very *belle ideal* of a miller's wife!

But to go on. Twelve couple accompanied the happy miller and his bride to the manse, independent of the married, middle-aged, and grey-haired visiters, who followed behind and by our side. We were thus proceeding onward to the house of the minister, whose blessing was to make a couple happy, and the arm of the blooming bride was through mine, when I heard a voice, or rather let me say a sound, like the croak of a raven, exclaim—

"Mercy on us! saw ye e'er the like o' that!—the best man, I'll declare, has a *black* coat on!"

"An' that's no lucky!" replied another.

Lucky!" responded the raven voice—"just perfectly awfu'! I wadna it had happened at the weddin' o' a bairn o' mine for the king's dominions."

I observed the bride steal a glance at my shoulder; I felt

or thought I felt, as if she shrunk from my arm; and when I spoke to her her speech faltered. I found that my cousin, in avoiding one omen, had stumbled upon another, in my black coat. I was wroth with the rural prophetess, and turned round to behold her. Her little grey eyes, twinkling through spectacles, were wink winking upon my ill-fated coat. She was a crooked, (forgive me for saying an ugly,) little, old woman; she was "bearded like a pard," and walked with a crooked stick mounted with silver. (On the very SPOT* where she then was, the last witch in Scotland was burned.) I turned from the grinning sibyl with disgust.

On the previous day, and during part of the night, the rain had fallen heavily, and the Broxburn was swollen to the magnitude of a little river. The manse lay on the opposite side of the burn, which was generally crossed by the aid of stepping-stones; but on the day in question the tops of the stones were barely visible. On crossing the burn, the foot of the bride slipped, and the bridegroom, in his eagerness to assist her, slipped also—knee-deep in the water. The raven voice was again heard—it was another omen.

The kitchen was the only room in the manse large enough to contain the spectators assembled to witness the ceremony, which passed over smoothly enough, save that, when the clergyman was about to join the hands of the parties, I drew off the glove of the bride a second or two before the bridesmaid performed a similar operation on the hand of the bridegroom. I heard the whisper of the crooked old woman, and saw that the eyes of the other women were upon me. I felt that I had committed another *omen*, and almost resolved to renounce wearing "blacks" for the future. The ceremony, however, was concluded; we returned from the manse, and everything was forgotten, save mirth and music, till the hour arrived for tea.

The bride's mother had boasted of her "daughter's double set o' real china" during the afternoon; and the female part of the company evidently felt anxious to examine the costly crockery. A young woman was entering with a tray and the tea equipage—another, similarly laden, followed behind her. The "sneck" of the door caught the handle of the tray, and down went china, waiting-maid, and all! The fall startled her companion—their feet became entangled—both embraced the floor, and the china from both trays lay scattered around them in a thousand shapes and sizes! This was an omen with a vengeance! I could not avoid stealing a look at the sleeve of my black coat. The bearded old woman seemed inspired. She declared the luck of the house was *broken!* Of the double set of real china not a cup was left—not an odd saucer. The bridegroom bore the misfortune as a man; and, gently drawing the head of his young partner towards him, said,

"Never mind them, hinny—let them gang—*we'll* get mair."

The bride, poor thing, shed a tear; but the miller threw his arm round her neck, stole a kiss, and she blushed and smiled.

It was evident, however, that every one of the company regarded this as a real omen. The mill-loft was prepared for the joyous dance; but scarce had the fantastic toes (some of them were not light ones) begun to move through the mazy rounds, when the loft-floor broke down beneath the bounding feet of the happy-hearted miller; for, unfortunately, he considered not that his goodly body was heavier than his spirits. It was omen upon omen—the work of *breaking* HAD begun—the "luck" of the young couple WAS departed.

Three days after the wedding, one of the miller's carts was got in readiness to carry home the bride's mother. On crossing the unlucky burn, to which we have already alluded, the horse stumbled, fell, and broke its knee, and had to be taken back, and another put in its place.

"Mair breakings!" exclaimed the now almost heart-broken old woman. "Oh, dear sake! how will a' this end for my puir bairn!"

I remained with my new-found relatives about a week; and while there, the miller sent his boy for payment of an account of thirty pounds, he having to make up money to pay a corn-factor at the Haddington market on the following day. In the evening the boy returned.

"Weel, callant," inquired the miller, "hae ye gotten the siller?"

"No," replied the youth.

"Mercy me!" exclaimed my cousin, hastily, "hae ye no gotten the siller? Wha did ye see, or what did they say?"

"I saw the wife," returned the boy; "an' she said—'Siller! laddie, what's brought ye here for siller—I dare; say your maister's daft! Do ye no ken we're broken! I'm sure a'body kens that *we broke yesterday!*'"

"The mischief break them!" exclaimed the miller, rising and walking hurriedly across the room—"this is *breaking* in earnest."

I may not here particularize the breakings that followed. One misfortune succeeded another, till the miller broke also. All that he had was put under the hammer, and he wandered forth with his young wife a broken man.

Some years afterwards, I met with him in a different part of the country. He had the management of extensive flour mills. He was again doing well, and had money in his master's hands. At last there seemed to be an end of the breakings. We were sitting together, when a third person entered, with a rueful countenance.

"Willie," said he, with the tone of a speaking sepulchre, "hae ye heard the news?"

"What news, now?" inquired the miller, seriously.

"The maister's *broken!*" rejoined the other.

"*An' my fifty pounds?*" responded my cousin, in a voice of horror.

"Are broken wi' him," returned the stranger. "Oh, gude gracious!" cried the young wife, wringing her hands, "I'm sure I wish I were out o' this world!—will ever thir breakings be done!—what tempted my mother to buy me the cheena?"

"Or me to wear a black coat at your wedding," thought I.

A few weeks afterwards a letter arrived, announcing that death had suddenly broken the thread of life of her aged father, and her mother requested them to come and take charge of the farm which was now theirs. They went. The old man had made money upon the hills. They got the better of the broken china and of my black coat. Fortune broke in upon them. My cousin declared that omens were nonsense, and his wife added that she "really thought there was naething in them. But it was lang an' mony a day," she added, "or I could get your black coat and my mother's cheena out o' my mind."

They began to prosper and they prosper still.



* The last person burned for witchcraft in Scotland was at SPOT—he scene of our present story.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

WE'LL HAVE ANOTHER.

When the glass, the laugh, and the social "crack" go round the convivial table, there are few who may not have heard the words, "*We'll have another!*" It is an oft repeated phrase—and it seems a simple one; yet, simple as it appears, it has a magical and fatal influence. The lover of sociality yieldeth to the friendly temptation it conveys, nor dreameth that it is a whisper from which scandal catcheth its thousand echoes—that it is a phrase which has blasted reputation—withered affection's heart—darkened the fairest prospects—ruined credit—conducted to the prison-house, and led to the grave. When our readers again hear the words, let them think of our present story.

Adam Brown was the eldest son of a poor widow, who kept a small shop in a village near the banks of the Teviot. From infancy, Adam was a mild retiring boy, and he was seldom seen to join in the sports of his schoolmates. On the winter evenings, he would sit poring over a book by the fire, while his mother would say—"Dinna stir up the fire, bairn; ye dinna mind that coals are dear; and I'm sure ye'll hurt yoursel' wi' pore, poring owre yer books—for they're never oot o' yer hand." In the summer, too, Adam would steal away from the noise of the village to some favourite shady nook by the river side; and there, on the gowany brae, he would, with a standard author in his hand, "crack wi' kings," or "hold high converse with the mighty dead." He was about thirteen when his father died; and the Rev. Mr Douglas, the minister of the parish, visiting the afflicted widow, she said, "she had had a sair bereavement, yet she had reason to be thankfu' that she had ae comfort left, for her poor Adam was a great consolation to her; every nicht he had read a chapter to his younger brothers—and, oh, sir," she added, "it wad make your heart melt to have heard my bairn pray for his widowed mother." Mr Douglas became interested in the boy, and finding him apt to learn, he placed him for another year at the parish school, at his own expense. Adam's progress was all that his patron could desire. He became a frequent visiter at the manse, and was allowed the use of the minister's library. Mr Douglas had a daughter who was nearly of the same age as his young *protégé*. Mary Douglas was not what could be called beautiful; but she was a gentle and interesting girl. She and Adam read and studied together. She delighted in a flower-garden, and he was wont to dress it; and he would often wander miles, and consider himself happy when he obtained a strange root to plant in it.

Adam was now sixteen. It was his misfortune, as it has been the ruin of many, to be *without an aim*. His mother declared that she was at a loss what to make him; "But," added she, "he is a guid scholar, that is ae thing, and Can Do is easy carried about." Mr Douglas himself became anxious about Adam's prospects: he evinced a dislike to be apprenticed to any mechanical profession, and he was too old to remain longer a burden upon his mother. At the suggestion of Mr Douglas, therefore, when about seventeen, he opened a school in a neighbouring village. Some said, that he was too young; others, that he was too simple, that he allowed the children to have all their own way; and a few even hinted that he went too much back and forward to the manse in the adjoining parish, to pay attention to his school. However these things might be, certain it is the school did not succeed; and, after struggling with it for two years, he resolved to try his fortune in London.

He was to sail from Leith, and his trunk had been sent to Hawick to be forwarded by the carrier. Adam was to leave his mother's house early on the following morning; and on the evening preceding his departure, he paid his farewell visit to the Manse. Mr Douglas received him with his wonted kindness; he gave him one or two letters of recommendation, and much wholesome advice, although the good man was nearly as ignorant of what is called the world as the youth who was about to enter it. Adam sat long, and said little; for his heart was full and his spirit heavy. He had never said to Mary Douglas, in plain words, that he loved her—he had never dared to do so; and he now sat with his eyes anxiously bent upon her, trembling to bid her farewell. She too was silent. At length he rose to depart; he held out his hand to Mr Douglas; the latter shook it affectionately, adding—"Farewell, Adam!—may Heaven protect you against the numerous temptations of the great city!" He turned towards Mary—he hesitated, his hands dropped by his side—"Could I speak wi' you a moment?" said he, and his tongue faltered as he spoke. With a tear glistening in her eyes, she looked towards her father, who nodded his consent, and she arose and accompanied Adam to the door. They walked towards the flower-garden—he had taken her hand in his—he pressed it, but he spoke not, and she offered not to withdraw it. He seemed struggling to speak; and, at length, in a tone of earnest fondness—and he shook as he spoke—he said, "Will you not forget me, Mary?"

A half-smothered sob was her reply, and a tear fell on his hand.

"Say you will not," he added, yet more earnestly.

"O Adam!" returned she, "how can you say *forget*?—Never! never!"

"Enough! enough!" he continued, and they wept together.

It was scarce daybreak when Adam rose to take his departure, and to bid his mother and his brethren farewell. "Oh!" exclaimed she, as she placed his breakfast before him, "is this the last meal that my bairn's to eat in my house?" He ate but little; and she continued—weeping as she spoke—"Eat, hinny, eat; ye have a lang road before ye;—and, O Adam, aboon everything earthly, mind that ye write to me every week; never think o' the postage—for, though it should tak my last farthing, I maun hear frae ye."

He took his staff in his hand, and prepared to depart. He embraced his younger brothers, and tears were their only and mutual adieu. His parent sobbed aloud. "Fareweel, mother!" said he, in a voice half-choked with anguish—"Fareweel!"

"God bless my bairn!" she exclaimed, wringing his hand, and she leaned her head upon his shoulder, and wept as though her heart would burst. In agony, he tore himself from her embrace, and hurried from the house; and during the first miles of his journey, at every rising ground, he turned anxiously round, to obtain another lingering look of the place of his nativity; and, in the fulness and bitterness of his feelings, he pronounced the names of his mother, and his brethren, and of Mary Douglas in the same breath.

We need not describe his passage to London, nor tell how he stood gazing wonderstruck, like a graven image of amazement, as the vessel winded up the Thames, through the long forest of masts, from which waved the flags of every nation,

It was about mid-day, early in the month of April, when the smack drew up off Hermitage Stairs, and Adam was aroused from his reverie of astonishment, by a waterman, who had come upon deck, and who, pulling him by the button-hole, said—"Boat, master? boat?" Adam did not exactly understand the question, but, seeing the other passengers getting their luggage into the boats, he followed their example. On landing, he was surrounded by a group of porters, several of whom took hold of his trunk, all inquiring, at the same moment, where he wished it taken to. This was a question he could not answer. It was one he had never thought of before. He looked confused, and replied, "I watna."

"*Watna!*" said one of the Cockney burden-bearers—"*Watna!*—there an't such a street in all London."

Adam was in the midst of London, and he knew not a living soul among its million of inhabitants. He knew not where to go; but, recollecting that one of the gentlemen to whom Mr Douglass had recommended him was a Mr Davison, a merchant in Cornhill, he inquired—

"Does ony o' ye ken a Mr Davison, a merchant in Cornhill?"

"Vy, I can't say as how I know him," replied a porter; 'but, if you wish your luggage taken there, I will find him for you in a twinkling."

"An' what wad ye be asking to carry the bit box there?" said Adam, in a manner betokening an equal proportion of simplicity and caution.

"Hasking?" replied the other—"vy, I'm blessed if you get any one to carry it for less than four shillings."

"I canna afford four shillings," said Adam, "and I'll be obleeged to ye if ye'll gie me a lift on to my shouther wi't, an' I'll carry it mysel'."

They uttered some low jests against his country, and left him to get his trunk upon his shoulders as he best might. Adam said truly that he could not afford four shillings; for, after paying his passage, he had not thirty shillings left in the world.

It is time, however, that we should describe Adam more particularly to our readers. He was dressed in a coarse grey coat, with trowsers of the same colour, a stripped waistcoat, a half-worn broad-brimmed hat, and thick shoes studded with nails, which clattered as he went. Thus arrayed, and with his trunk upon his shoulders, Adam went tramping and clattering along East Smithfield, over Tower-hill, and along the Minories, inquiring at every turning—"If any one could direct him to Mr Davison's, the merchant in Cornhill?" There was many a laugh, and many a joke, at poor Adam's expense, as he went trudging along, and more than once the trunk fell to the ground, as he came in contact with the crowds who were hurrying past him. He had been directed out of his way; but at length he arrived at the place he sought. He placed his burden on the ground—he rang the bell—and again and again he rang, but no one answered. His letter was addressed to Mr Davison's counting-house—it was past business hours, and his office was locked up for the day. Adam was now tired, disappointed, and perplexed. He wist not what to do. He informed several "decent-looking people," as he said, "that he was a stranger, and he would be obleeged to them if they could recommend him to a lodging." He was shewn several, but the rent per week terrified Adam. He was sinking under his burden, when, near the corner of Newgate Street, he inquired of an old Irish orange-woman, if "she could inform him where he would be likely to obtain a lodging at the rate of eighteen-pence or two shillings a-week?

"Sure, and it's I who can, jewel," replied she; "and an iligant room it is, with a bed his Holiness might rest his blessed bones on, and never a one slapes in it at all but my own boy Barney; and, barring when Barney's in dhrink—and that's not above twice a-week—you'll make mighty pleasant sort of company together."

Adam was glad to have the prospect of a resting-place of any sort before him at last, and with a lighter heart and a freer step he followed the old orange-woman. She conducted him to Green Dragon Court, and desiring him to follow her up a long, dark, dirty stair, ushered him into a small, miserable-looking garret, dimly lighted by a broken sky-light, while the entire furniture consisted of four wooden posts without curtains, which she termed a bed, a mutilated chair, and a low wooden stool. "Now, darlint," said she, observing Adam fatigued, "here is a room fit for a prince; and, sure you won't be thinking half-a-crown too much for it?"

"Weel," said Adam, for he was ready to lie down any where, "we'll no quarrel about a sixpence."

The orange-woman left him, having vainly recommended him "to christen his new tenement with a drop of the cratur." Adam threw himself upon the bed, and, in a few minutes, his spirit wandered in its dreams amidst the "bonny woods and braes" of Teviotdale. Early on the following day he proceeded to the counting-house of Mr Davison, who received him with a hurried sort of civility—glanced over the letter of introduction—expressed a hope that Mr Douglas was well—said he would be happy to serve him—but he was engaged at present, and, if Mr Brown would call again, if he should hear of anything, he would let him know. Adam thanked him, and, with his best bow, (which was a very awkward one,) withdrew. The clerks in the outer office tittered as poor Adam, with his heavy hob-nailed shoes, tramped through the midst of them. He delivered the other letter of introduction, and the gentleman to whom it was addressed received him much in the same manner as Mr Davison had done, and his clerks also smiled at Adam's grey coat, and gave a very peculiar look at his clattering shoes, and then at each other. Day after day he repeated his visits to the counting-houses of these gentlemen—sometimes they were too much engaged to see him, at others they simply informed him that they were sorry they had heard of nothing to suit him, and continued writing, without noticing him again; while Adam, with a heavy heart, would stand behind their desk, brushing the crown of his brown broad-brimmed hat with his sleeve. At length, the clerks in the outer office merely informed him their master had heard of nothing for him. Adam saw it was in vain—three weeks had passed, and the thirty shillings which he had brought to London were reduced to ten.

He was wandering disconsolately down Chancery Lane, with his hands thrust in his pockets, when his attention was attracted to a shop, the windows and door of which were covered with written placards, and on these placards were the words, "*Wanted, a Book-keeper*"—"*Wanted, by a Literary Gentleman, an Amanuensis*"—in short, there seemed no sort of situation for which there was not a person wanted, and each concluded with "*inquire within.*" Adam's heart and his eyes overflowed with joy. There were at least half a dozen places which would suit him exactly—he was only at a loss now which to choose upon—and he thought also that Mr Douglas' friends had used him most unkindly in saying they could hear of no situation for him, when here scores were advertised in the streets. At length he fixed upon one. He entered the shop. A sharp, Jewish-looking little man was writing at a desk—he received the visiter with a gracious smile.

"If ye please, sir," said Adam, "will ye be so good as inform me where the gentleman lives that wants the book-keeper?"

"With pleasure," said the master of the register office, "but you must give me five shillings, and I will enter you name."

"Five shillings!" repeated Adam, and a new light began to dawn upon him. "Five shillings, sir, is a deal o' money, an', to tell ye the truth, I can very ill afford it; but, as I am much in want o' a situation, maybe ye wad tak' half-a-crown."

"Can't book you for that," said the other; "but give me your half-crown, and you may have the gentleman's address."

He directed him to a merchant in Thames Street. Adam quickly found the house; and, entering with his broad-brimmed hat in his hand, and scraping the hob-nails along the floor—"Sir," said he, "I'm the person Mr Daniells o' Chancery Lane has sent to you as a book-keeper."

"Mr Daniells—Mr Daniells?" said the merchant; "don't know any such person—have not wanted a book-keeper these six months."

"Sir," said Adam, "are ye no Mr Robertson o' 54 Thames Street?"

"I am," replied the merchant; "but," added he, "I see how it is. Pray, young man, what did you give this Mr Daniells to recommend you to the situation?"

"Half-a-crown, sir," returned Adam. "Well," said the other, "you have more money than wit. Good morning, sir, and take care of another Mr Daniells."

Poor Adam was dumfoundered; and, in the bitterness of his spirit, he said London was a den o' thieves. I might tell you how his last shilling was expended—how he lived upon bread and water—how he fell into arrears with the orange-woman for the rent of his garret—how she persecuted him—how he was puzzled to understand the meaning of the generous words, "*Money Lent;*"—how the orange-woman, in order to obtain her rent, taught him the mystery of the *three golden balls*—and how the shirts which his mother had made him from a web of her own spinning, and his books, and all that he had, save the clothes upon his back, were pledged—and how, when all was gone, the old landlady turned him to the door, houseless, friendless, penniless, with no companion but despair. We might have dwelt upon these things, but must proceed with his history.

Adam, after enduring privations which would make humanity shudder, obtained the situation of assistant-porter in a merchant's office. The employment was humble, but he received it joyfully. He was steady and industrious, and it was not long until he was appointed warehouseman; and his employer, finding that, in addition to his good qualities, he had received a superior education, made him one of his confidential clerks. He had held the situation about two years. The rust, as his brother clerks said, was now pretty well rubbed off Scotch Adam. His hodden-gray was laid aside for the dashing green, his hob-nailed shoes for fashionable pumps, and his broad-brimmed hat for a narrow-crowned beaver; his speech, too, had caught a sprinkling of the southern accent; but, in other respects, he was the same inoffensive, steady, and serious being as when he left his mother's cottage.

His companions were wont to "roast" Adam, as they termed it, on what they called his Methodism. They had often urged him to accompany them to the theatre; but, for two years, he had stubbornly withstood their temptations. The stage was to Adam what the tree of knowledge was to his first namesake and progenitor. He had been counselled against it, he had read against it, he had heard sermons against it; but had never been within the walls of a theatre. *The* Siddons, and her brother John Kemble, then in the zenith of their fame, were filling not only London but Europe with their names. One evening they were to perform together—Adam had often heard of them—he admired Shakspeare—his curiosity was excited—he yielded to the solicitations of his companions, and accompanied them to Covent Garden. The curtain was drawn up. The performance began. Adam's soul was riveted, his senses distracted. The Siddons swept before him like a vision of immortality—Kemble seemed to draw a soul from the tomb of the Cæsars; and, as the curtain fell, and the loud music pealed, Adam felt as if a new existence and a new world had opened before him, and his head reeled with wonder and delight.

When the performances were concluded, his companions proposed to have a single bottle in an adjoining tavern; Adam offered some opposition, but was prevailed upon to accompany them. Several of the players entered—they were convivial spirits, abounding with wit, anecdote, and song. The scene was new, but not unpleasant to Adam. He took no note of time. He was unused to drink, and little affected him. The first bottle was finished. "We 'll Have Another," said one of his companions. It was the first time Adam had heard the fatal words, and he offered no opposition. He drank again—he began to expatiate on divers subjects—he discovered he was an orator. "Well done, Mr Brown," cried one of his companions, "there 's hope of you yet—*we'll have another*, my boy—three 's band!" A third bottle was brought; Adam was called upon for a song. He could sing, and sing well too; and, taking his glass in his hand, he began—

"Stop, stop, we 'll hae anither gill,
Ne'er mind a lang-tongued beldame's yatter;
They 're fools wha'd leave a glass o' yill
For ony wife's infernal clatter.

"There 's Bet, when I gang hame the night,
Will set the hail stair-head a ringin'—
Let a' the neebors hear her flyte,
Ca' me a brute, and stap my singin'.
She 'll yelp about the bairns' rags—
Ca' me a drucken gude-for-naethin'!
She 'll curse my throat an' drouthy bags,
An' at me thraw their duddy claethin'!

"Chorus, gentlemen—chorus!" cried Adam, and continued—

"The fient a supper I 'll get there—
A *dish o tongues* is a' she 'll gie me!
She 'll shake her nieve and rug her hair,
An' wonder hoo she e'er gaed wi' me!
She vows to leave me, an' I say,
'Gang, gang! for dearsake!—that's a blessin'!'
She rins to get her claes away,
But—*o' the kist the hey's amissin'*!

"The younkers a' set up a skirl,
They shriek an' cry—'Oh dinna, mither!'
I slip to bed, an' fash the quarrel
Neither ae way nor anither.
Bet creeps beside me unca dour,
I clap her back, an' say—'My dawtie!'
Quo' she—'Weel, weel, my passion 's owre,
But dinna gang a-drinkin', Watty.'"

"Bravo, Scotchy!" shouted one. "Your health and song, Mr Brown," cried another. Adam's head began to swim—the lights danced before his eyes—he fell from his chair. One of his friends called a hackney coach; and, half insensible of where he was, he was conveyed to his lodgings. It was afternoon on the following day before he appeared at the counting-house, and his eyes were red, and he had the languid look of one who has spent a night in revelry. That night he was again prevailed upon to accompany his brother clerks to the club room, "just," as they expressed it, "to have one bottle to put all right." That night he again heard the words—"*We'll have another*," and again he yielded to their seduction.

But we will not follow him through the steps and through the snares by which he departed from virtue and became entangled in vice. He became an almost nightly frequenter of the tavern, the theatre, or both, and his habits opened up temptations to grosser viciousness. Still he kept up a correspondence with Mary Douglas, the gentle object of his young affections, and, for a time, her endeared remembrance haunted him like a protecting angel, whispering in his ear and saving him from depravity. But his religious principles were already forgotten; and, when that cord was snapped asunder, the fibre of affection that twined around his heart

did not long hold him in the path of virtue. As the influence of company grew upon him, her remembrance lost its power, and Adam Brown plunged headlong into all the pleasures and temptations of the metropolis.

Still he was attentive to business—he still retained the confidence of his employer—his salary was liberal—he still sent thirty pounds a-year to his mother; and Mary Douglas yet held a place in his heart, though he was changed—fatally changed. He had been about four years in his situation when he obtained leave for a few weeks to visit his native village. It was on a summer afternoon, when a chase from Jedburgh drove up to the door of the only public-house in the village. A fashionably dressed young man alighted, and, in an affected voice, desired the landlord to send a *porter* with his luggage to Mrs Brown's. "A porter, sir?" said the innkeeper—"there's nacthin' o' the kind in the toun; but I'll get twa callants to tak it alang."

He hastened to his mother's—"Ah! how d'ye do?" said he, slightly shaking the hands of his younger brothers—but a tear gathered in his eye as his mother kissed his cheek. She, good soul, when the first surprise was over, said "she hardly kenned her bairn in sic a fine gentleman." He proceeded to the manse, and Mary marvelled at the change in his appearance and his manner; yet she loved him not the less: but her father beheld the affectation and levity of his young friend, and grieved over them.

He had not been a month in the village when Mary gave him her hand, and they set out for London together. For a few weeks after their arrival, he spent his evenings at their own fireside, and they were blest in the society of each other. But it was not long until company again spread its seductive snares around him. Again he listened to the words—"*We'll have another*"—again be yielded to their temptation, and again the *force of habit* made him its slave. Night followed night, and he was irritable and unhappy, unless in the midst of his boon companions. Poor Mary felt the bitterness and anguish of a deserted wife; but she upbraided him not—she spoke not of her sorrows. Health forsook her cheeks, and gladness had fled from her spirit; yet as she nightly sat hour after hour waiting his return, as he entered, she welcomed him with a smile, which not unfrequently was met with an imprecation or a frown. They had been married about two years. Mary was a mother, and oft at midnight she would sit weeping over the cradle of her child, mourning in secret for its thoughtless father.

It was her birth-day, her father had come to London to visit them; she had not told him of her sorrows, and she had invited a few friends to dine with them. They had assembled; but Adam was still absent. He had been unkind to her; but this was an unkindness she did not expect from him. They were yet waiting, when a police-officer entered. His errand was soon told. Adam Brown had become a gambler, as well as a drunkard—he had been guilty of fraud and embezzlement—his guilt had been discovered, and the police were in quest of him. Mr Douglas wrung his hands and groaned. Mary bore the dreadful blow with more than human fortitude. She uttered no scream—she shed no tears; for a moment she sat motionless—speechless. It was the dumbness of agony. With her child at her breast, and, in the midst of her guests, she flung herself at her father's feet. "Father!" she exclaimed, "for my sake!—for my helpless child's sake—save! oh, save my poor husband!"

"For your sake, what I can do I will do, dearest," groaned the old man.

A coach was ordered to the door, and the miserable wife and her father hastened to the office of her husband's employer.

When Adam Brown received intelligence that his guilt was discovered, from a companion, he was carousing with others in a low gambling-house. Horror seized him, and he hurried from the room; but he returned in a few minutes. "*We'll have another!*" he exclaimed, in a tone of frenzy—and another was brought. He half filled a glass—he raised it to his lips—he dashed into it a deadly poison, and, ere they could stay his hand, the fatal draught was swallowed. He had purchased a quantity of arsenic when he rushed from the house.

His fellow-gamblers were thronging around him, when his injured wife and her grey-haired father entered the room. "Away, tormentors!" he exclaimed, as his glazed eyes fell upon them, and he dashed his hand before his face.

"My husband! my dear husband!" cried Mary, flinging her arms around his neck; "look on me—speak to me! All is well!"

He gazed on her face—he grasped her hand—"Mary—my injured Mary!" he exclaimed, convulsively, "can *you* forgive me—*you*—*you*? O God! I was once innocent; Forgive me, dearest!—for our child's sake, curse not its guilty father!"

"Husband!—Adam!" she cried, wringing his hand—"come with me, love, come—leave this horrid place—you have nothing to fear—your debt is paid."

"Paid!" he exclaimed, wildly—"Ha! ha!—Paid!" They were his last words—convulsions came upon him—the film of death passed over his eyes, and his troubled spirit fled.

She clung round his neck—she yet cried, "Speak to me!"—she refused to believe that he was dead, and her reason seemed to have fled with his spirit.

She was taken from his body and conveyed home. The agony of grief subsided into a stupor approaching imbecility. She was unconscious of all around; and within three weeks from the death of her husband, the broken spirit of Mary Douglas found rest, and her father returned in sorrow with her helpless orphan to Teviotdale.

THE SOLDIER'S RETURN.

Seven or eight years ago, I was travelling between Berwick and Selkirk; and, having started at the crowing of the cock, I had left Melrose before four in the afternoon. On arriving at Abbotsford, I perceived a Highland soldier, apparently fatigued as myself, leaning upon a walking-stick, and gazing intensely on the fairy palace of the magician whose wand is since broken, but whose magic still remains. I am no particular disciple of Lavater's; yet the man carried his soul upon his face, and we were friends at the first glance. He wore a plain Highland bonnet, and a course grey greatcoat, buttoned to the throat. His dress bespoke him to belong only to the ranks; but there was a dignity in his manner and a fire, a glowing language, in his eyes, worthy of a chieftain. His height might exceed five feet nine, and his age be about thirty. The traces of manly beauty were still upon his cheeks; but the sun of a western hemisphere had tinged them with a sallow hue, and imprinted untimely furrows.

Our conversation related chiefly to the classic scenery around us; and we had pleasantly journeyed together for two or three miles, when we arrived at a little sequestered burial-ground by the way-side, near which there was neither church nor dwelling. Its low wall was thinly covered with turf, and we sat down upon it to rest. My companion became silent and melancholy, and his eyes wandered anxiously among the graves.

"Here," said he, "sleep some of my father's children, who died in infancy."

He picked up a small stone from the ground, and, throwing it gently about ten yards, "That," added he, "is the very

spot. But, thank God! no grave-stone has been raised during my absence! It is a token I shall find my parents living; and," continued he, with a sigh, "may I also find their love! It is hard, sir, when the heart of a parent is turned against his own child."

He dropped his head upon his breast for a few moments, and was silent; and, hastily raising his forefinger to his eyes, seemed to dash away a solitary tear. Then, turning to me, he continued—"You may think, sir, this is weakness in a soldier; but human hearts beat beneath a red coat. My father, whose name is Campbell, and who was brought from Argyleshire while young, is a wealthy farmer in this neighbourhood. Twelve years ago, I loved a being gentle as the light of a summer moon. We were children together, and she grew in beauty on my sight, as the star of evening steals into glory through the twilight. But she was poor and portionless, the daughter of a mean shepherd. Our attachment offended my father. He commanded me to leave her for ever. I could not, and he turned me from his house. I wandered—I knew not, and I cared not, whither. But I will not detain you with my history. In my utmost need, I met a sergeant of the forty-second, who was then upon the recruiting service, and, in a few weeks, I joined that regiment of proud hearts. I was at Brussels when the invitation to the wolf and the raven rang at midnight through the streets. It was the herald of a day of glory and of death. There were three Highland regiments of us—three joined in one—joined in rivalry, in love, and in purpose; and, thank Fate! I was present when the Scots Greys, flying to our aid, raised the electric shout, 'Scotland for ever!'—'Scotland for ever!' returned our tartaned clansmen; 'Scotland for ever!' reverberated as from the hearts we had left behind us; and 'Scotland for ever!' re-echoed 'Victory!' Heavens!" added he, starting to his feet, and grasping his staff, as the enthusiasm of the past gushed back upon his soul, "to have joined in that shout was to live an eternity in the vibration of a pendulum!"

In a few moments, the animated soul, that gave eloquence to his tongue, drew itself back into the chambers of humanity, and, resuming his seat upon the low wall, he continued—"I left my old regiment with the prospect of promotion, and have since served in the West Indies; but I have heard nothing of my father—nothing of my mother—nothing of her I love!"

While he was yet speaking, the grave-digger, with a pick-axe and a spade over his shoulder, entered the ground. He approached within a few yards of where we sat. He measured off a narrow piece of earth—it encircled the little stone which the soldier had thrown to mark out the burial-place of his family. Convulsion rushed over the features of my companion; he shivered—he grasped my arm—his lips quivered—his breathing became short and loud—the cold sweat trickled from his temples. He sprang over the wall—he rushed towards the spot.

"Man!" he exclaimed in agony, "whose grave is that?"

"Hoot! awa wi' ye!" said the grave-digger, starting back at his manner; "whatna way is that to gliff a body!—are ye daft?"

"Answer me," cried the soldier, seizing his hand; "whose grave—whose grave is that?"

"Mercy me!" replied the man of death, "ye're surely out o' yer head; it's an auld body they ca'd Adam Campbell's grave; now, are ye onything the wiser for spierin'?"

"My father!" cried my comrade, as I approached him; and, clasping his hands together, he bent his head upon my shoulder, and wept aloud.

I will not dwell upon the painful scene. During his absence, adversity had given the fortunes of his father to the wind; and he had died in an humble cottage, unlamented and unnoticed by the friends of his prosperity.

At the request of my fellow-traveller, I accompanied him to the house of mourning. Two or three poor cottagers sat around the fire. The coffin, with the lid open, lay across a table near the window. A few white hairs fell over the whiter face of the deceased, which seemed to indicate that he died from sorrow rather than from age. The son pressed his lips to his father's cheek. He groaned in spirit, and was troubled. He raised his head in agony, and, with a voice almost inarticulate with grief, exclaimed, inquiringly—"My mother?"

The wondering peasants started to their feet, and in silence pointed to a lowly bed. He hastened forward—he fell upon his knees by the bed-side.

"My mother!—Oh, my mother!" he exclaimed, 'do not you, too, leave me! Look at me—speak to me—I am your own son—your own Willie—have you, too, forgot me, mother?"

She, too, lay upon her death-bed, and the tide of life was fast ebbing; but the remembered voice of her beloved son drove it back for a moment. She opened her eyes—she attempted to raise her feeble hand, and it fell upon his head. She spoke, but he alone knew the words that she uttered; they seemed accents of mingled anguish, of joy, and of blessing. For several minutes he bent over the bed, and wept bitterly. He held her withered hand in his; he started; and, as we approached him, the hand he held was stiff and lifeless. He wept no longer—he gazed from the dead body of his father to that of his mother; his eyes wandered wildly from the one to the other; he smote his hand upon his brow, and threw himself upon a chair, while misery transfixed him, as if a thunderbolt had entered his soul.

I will not give a description of the melancholy funerals, and the solitary mourner. The father's obsequies were delayed, and the son laid both his parents in the same grave.

Several months passed away before I gained information respecting the sequel of my little story. After his parents were laid in the dust, William Campbell, with a sad and anxious heart, made inquiries after Jeanie Leslie, the object of his early affections, to whom we have already alluded. For several weeks, his search was fruitless; but, at length, he learned that considerable property had been left to her father by a distant relative, and that he now resided somewhere in Dumfriesshire.

In the same garb which I have already described, the soldier set out upon his journey. With little difficulty he discovered the house. It resembled such as are occupied by the higher class of farmers. The front door stood open. He knocked, but no one answered. He proceeded along the passage—he heard voices in an apartment on the right—again he knocked, but was unheeded. He entered uninvited. A group were standing in the middle of the floor; and, amongst them, a minister, commencing the marriage-service of the Church of Scotland. The bride hung her head sorrowfully, and tears were stealing down her cheeks—she was his own Jeanie Leslie. The clergyman paused. The bride's father stepped forward angrily, and inquired—"What do ye want, sir?" but, instantly recognising his features, he seized him by the breast, and, in a voice half-choked with passion, continued—"Sorrow tak ye for a scoundrel! What's brought ye here—and the mair especially at a time like this! Get oot o' my house, sir! I say, Willie Campbell, get oot o' my house, and never darken my door again wi' yer ne er-do-weel countenance!"

A sudden shriek followed the mention of his name, and Jeanie Leslie fell into the arms of her bridesmaid.

"Peace, Mr Leslie!" said the soldier, pushing the old man aside; "since matters are thus, I will only stop to say farewell, for auld langsyne—you cannot deny me that."

He passed towards the object of his young love. She spoke not—she moved not—he took her hand; but she seemed

unconscious of what he did. And, as he again gazed upon her beautiful countenance, absence became as a dream upon her face. The very language he had acquired during their separation was laid aside. Nature triumphed over art, and he addressed her in the accents in which he had first breathed love, and won her heart.

"Jeanie!" said he, pressing her hand between his, "it's a sair thing to say *farewell;* but, at present, I maun say it. This is a scene I never expected to see; for, O Jeanie! I could have trusted to your truth and to your love, as the farmer trusts to seed-time and to harvest, and is not disappointed. O Jeanie, woman! this is like separating the flesh from the bones, and burning the marrow. But ye maun be anither's now—fareweel!—fareweel!"

"No! no!—my ain Willie!" she exclaimed, recovering from the action of stupefaction: "my hand is still free, and my heart has aye been yours—save me, Willie! save me!" And she threw herself into his arms.

The bridegroom looked from one to another, imploring them to commence an attack upon the intruder; but he looked in vain. The father again seized the old grey coat of the soldier, and, almost rending it in twain, discovered underneath, to the astonished company, the richly laced uniform of a British officer. He dropped the fragment of the outer garment in wonder, and at the same time dropping his wrath, exclaimed, "Mr Campbell!—or what are ye?—will you explain yoursel'?"

A few words explained all. The bridegroom, a wealthy middle-aged man, without a heart, left the house, gnashing his teeth. Badly as our military honours are conferred, merit is not always overlooked even in this country, where money is everything, and the Scottish soldier had obtained the promotion he deserved. Jeanie's joy was like a dream of heaven. In a few weeks, she gave her hand to Captain Campbell of his Majesty's —— regiment of infantry, to whom, long years before, she had given her young heart.

THE RED HALL;

OR

BERWICK IN 1296.

Somewhat more than five hundred years ago, and Berwick-upon-Tweed was the most wealthy and flourishing city in Great Britain. Its commerce was the most extensive, its merchants the most enterprising and successful. London in some measure strove to be its rival, but it possessed not a tenth of the natural advantages, and Berwick continued to bear the palm alone—being styled the Alexandria of the nations, the emporium of commerce, and one of the first commercial cities of the world. This state of prosperity it owed almost solely to Alexander III., who did more for Berwick than any sovereign that has since claimed its allegiance. He brought over a colony of wealthy Flemings, for whom he erected an immense building, called the Red Hall, (situated where the Woolmarket now stands,) and which at once served as dwelling-houses, factories, and a fortress. The terms upon which he granted a charter to this company of merchants, were, that they should defend, even unto death, their Red Hall against every attack of an enemy, and of the English in particular. Wool was the staple commodity of their commerce; but they also traded extensively in silks and in foreign manufactures. The people of Berwick understood Free Trade in those days. In this state of peace and enviable prosperity, it continued until the spring of 1296. The bold, the crafty, and revengeful Edward I. meditated an invasion of Scotland; and Berwick, from its wealth, situation, and importance, was naturally anticipated to be the first object of his attack. To defeat this, Baliol, whom we can sometimes almost admire—though generally we despise and pity him—sent the chief men of Fife and their retainers to the assistance of the town. Easter week arrived, but no tidings were heard of Edward's movements, and business went on with its wonted bustle. Amongst the merchants of the Red Hall, was one known by the appellation of William the Fleming, and he had a daughter, an heiress and only child, whose beauty was the theme of Berwick's minstrels, when rhyme was beginning to begin. Many a knee was bent to the rich and beautiful Isabella; but she preferred the humble and half-told passion of Francis Scott, who was one of the clerks in the Red Hall, to all the chivalrous declarations of prouder lovers. Francis possessed industry and perseverance; and these, in the eyes of her father, were qualifications precious as rubies. These, with love for his daughter, overcame other mercenary objections, and the day for their marriage had arrived. Francis and Isabella were kneeling before the altar, and the priest was pronouncing the service—the merchant was gazing fondly over his child—when a sudden and a hurried peal from the Bell Tower broke upon the ceremony—and cries of "The English! to arms!" were heard from the street. The voice of the priest faltered—he stopped—William the Fleming placed his hand upon his sword—the bridegroom started to his feet, and the fair Isabella clung to his side. "Come, children," said the merchant, "let us to the Hall—a happier hour may bless your nuptials—this is no moment for bridal ceremony." And, in silence, each man grasping his sword, they departed from the chapel, where the performance of the marriage rites was broken by the sounds of invasion. The ramparts were crowded with armed citizens, and a large English fleet were seen bearing round Lindisferne. In a few hours the hostile vessels entered the river, and commenced a furious attack upon the town. Their assault was returned by the inhabitants as men who were resolved to die for liberty. For hours the battle raged, and the Tweed became as a sheet of blood. But, while the conflict rose fiercest, again the Bell Tower sent forth its sounds of death. Edward, at the head of thirty-five thousand chosen troops, had crossed the river at Coldstream, and was now seen encamping at the foot of Halidon Hill. Part of his army immediately descended upon the town, to the assistance of his fleet. They commenced a resolute attack from the north, while the greater part of the garrison held bloody combat with the ships in the river. Though thus attacked upon both sides, the besieged fought with the courage of surrounded lions and the proud fleet was defeated and driven from the river. The attacks of the army were desperate, but without success for desperate were the men who opposed them. Treachery however, that to this day remains undiscovered, existed in the town; and, at an hour when the garrison thought not the gates were deceitfully opened, and the English army rushed like a torrent upon the streets. Wildly the work of slaughter began. With the sword and with the knife, the inhabitants defended every house, every foot of ground. Mild mothers and gentle maidens fought for their thresholds with the fury of hungry wolves—and delicate hands did deeds of carnage. The war of blood raged from street to street, while the English army poured on like a ceaseless stream. Shouts, groans, the clang of swords, and the shrieks of women mingled together. Fiercer grew the close and the deadly warfare; but the numbers of the besieged became few. Heaps of dead men lay at every door, each with his sword glued to his hands by the blood of an enemy. Of the warriors from Fife, every man perished; but their price was a costly sacrifice of the boldest lives in England. The streets ran deep with blood: and, independent of slaughtered enemies, the mangled and lifeless bodies of seventeen thousand of the inhabitants paved the streets. The war of death

ceased only from lack of lives to prey upon. With the exception of the Red Hall, the town was an awful and a silent charnel-house. Within it were the thirty brave Flemings, pouring their arrows upon the triumphant besiegers, and resolved to defend it to death. Amongst them was the father of Isabella, and by his side his intended son-in-law, his hands, which lately held a bride's, dripping with blood. The entire strength of the English army pressed around the Hall; and fearful were the doings which the band of devoted merchants, like death's own marksmen, made in the midst of them. What the besiegers, however, failed to effect by force, they effected by fire; and the Red Hall became enveloped in flames—its wool, its silks, and rich merchandise blazing together, and causing the fierce element to ascend like a pyramid. Still the brave men stood in the midst of the conflagration, unquailed, hurling death upon their enemies; and, as the fire raged from room to room, they rushed to the roof of their Hall, discharging their last arrow on their besiegers, and waving their swords around their heads with a shout of triumph. There, also, stood the father, his daughter, and her lover, smiling and embracing each other in death. Crash succeeded crash—the flames ascended higher and higher—and the proud building was falling to pieces. A louder crash followed, the fierce element surrounded the brave victims—the gentle Isabella, leaning on her bridegroom, was seen waving her slender hand in triumph round her head—the hardy band waved their swords and shouted "*Liberty!*" and, in one moment more, the building fell to the earth, and the heroes, the bridegroom, and his bride, were buried in the ruins of their fortress and their factory.

Thus fell the Red Hall, and with it the commercial glory of Berwick. Sir William Douglas surrendered the castle to Edward, and the town was given up to plunder and brutality. Its trade in wool and in foreign merchandise was transferred to its rival, London—and need we say that it has not recovered it?

GRIZEL COCHRANE.

A TALE OF TWEEDMOUTH MOOR.

When the tyranny and bigotry of the last James drove his subjects to take up arms against him, one of the most formidable enemies to his dangerous usurpations was Sir John Cochrane, ancestor of the present Earl of Dundonald. He was one of the most prominent actors in Argyle's rebellion, and for ages a destructive doom seemed to have hung over the house of Campbell, enveloping in a common ruin all who united their fortunes to the cause of its chieftains. The same doom encompassed Sir John Cochrane. He was surrounded by the King's troops—long, deadly, and desperate was his resistance; but, at length, overpowered by numbers, he was taken prisoner, tried, and condemned to die upon the scaffold. He had but a few days to live, and his jailer waited but the arrival of his death-warrant to lead him forth to execution. His family and his friends had visited him in prison, and exchanged with him the last, the long, the heart-yearning farewell. But there was one who came not with the rest to receive his blessing—one who was the pride of his eyes, and of his house—even Grizel, the daughter of his love. Twilight was casting a deeper gloom over the gratings of his prison-house, he was mourning for a last look of his favourite child, and his head was pressed against the cold damp walls of his cell, to cool the feverish pulsations that shot through it like stings of fire when the door of his apartment turned slowly on its unwilling hinges, and his keeper entered, followed by a young and beautiful lady. Her person was tall and commanding, her eyes dark, bright, and tearless; but their very brightness spoke of sorrow—of sorrow too deep to be wept away; and her raven tresses were parted over an open brow, clear and pure as the polished marble. The unhappy captive raised his head as they entered—

"My child! my own Grizel!" he exclaimed, and she fell upon his bosom.

"My father! my dear father!" sobbed the miserable maiden, and she dashed away the tear that accompanied the words.

"Your interview must be short—very short," said the jailer, as he turned and left them for a few minutes together

"God help and comfort thee, my daughter!" added the unhappy father, as he held her to his breast, and printed a kiss upon her brow. "I had feared that I should die without bestowing my blessing on the head of my own child, and that stung me more than death;—but thou art come, my love—thou art come! and the last blessing of thy wretched father"——

"Nay! forbear! forbear!" she exclaimed; "not thy last blessing!—not thy last! My father shall not die!"

"Be calm! be calm, my child!" returned he; "would to Heaven that I could comfort thee!—my own! my own! But there is no hope—within three days, and thou and all my little ones will be"——

Fatherless—he would have said, but the words died on his tongue.

"Three days!" repeated she, raising her head from his breast, but eagerly pressing his hand—"three days! then there *is* hope—my father *shall* live! Is not my grandfather the friend of Father Petre, the confessor and the master of the King:—from him he shall beg the life of his son, and my father shall not die."

"Nay! nay, my Grizel," returned he; "be not deceived—there is no hope—already my doom is sealed—already the King has signed the order for my execution, and the messenger of death is now on the way."

"Yet my father SHALL not!—SHALL not die!" she repeated emphatically, and, clasping her hands together—"Heaven speed a daughter's purpose!" she exclaimed; and, turning to her father, said calmly—"We part now, but we shall meet again."

"What would my child?" inquired he eagerly, gazing anxiously on her face.

"Ask not now," she replied, "my father—ask not now; but pray for me and bless me—but not with thy *last* blessing."

He again pressed her to his heart, and wept upon her neck. In a few moments the jailer entered, and they were torn from the arms of each other.

On the evening of the second day after the interview we have mentioned, a wayfaring man crossed the drawbridge at Berwick, from the north, and, proceeding down Marygate, sat down to rest upon a bench by the door of an hostelry on the south side of the street, nearly fronting where what was called the "Main-guard" then stood. He did not enter the inn; for it was above his apparent condition, being that which Oliver Cromwell had made his head-quarters a few years before, and where, at a somewhat earlier period, James the Sixth had taken up his residence when on his way to enter on the sovereignty of England. The traveller wore a coarse jerkin fastened round his body by a leathern girdle, and over it a short cloak, composed of equally plain materials. He was evidently a young man; but his beaver was drawn down, so as almost to conceal his features. In the one hand he carried a small bundle, and in the other a pilgrim's staff. Having called for a glass of wine, he took a crust of bread from his bundle, and, after resting for a few minutes, rose to depart. The shades of night were setting in and it

threatened to be a night of storms. The heavens were gathering black, the clouds rushing from the sea, sudden gusts of wind were moaning along the streets, accompanied by heavy drops of rain, and the face of the Tweed was troubled.

"Heaven help thee, if thou intendest to travel far in such a night as this!" said the sentinel at the English gate, as the traveller passed him and proceeded to cross the bridge.

In a few minutes, he was upon the borders of the wide, desolate, and dreary moor of Tweedmouth, which, for miles, presented a desert of whins, fern, and stunted heath, with here and there a dingle covered with thick brushwood. He slowly toiled over the steep hill, braving the storm which now raged in wildest fury. The rain fell in torrents, and the wind howled as a legion of famished wolves, hurling its doleful and angry echoes over the heath. Still the stranger pushed onward, until he had proceeded about two or three miles from Berwick, when, as if unable longer to brave the storm, he sought shelter amidst some crab and bramble bushes by the wayside. Nearly an hour had passed since he sought this imperfect refuge, and the darkness of the night and the storm had increased together, when the sound of a horse's feet was heard, hurriedly plashing along the road. The rider bent his head to the blast. Suddenly his horse was grasped by the bridle, the rider raised his head, and the traveller stood before him, holding a pistol to his breast.

"Dismount!" cried the stranger, sternly.

The horseman, benumbed and stricken with fear, made an effort to reach his arms; but, in a moment, the hand of the robber, quitting the bridle, grasped the breast of the rider, and dragged him to the ground. He fell heavily on his face, and for several minutes remained senseless. The stranger seized the leathern bag which contained the mail for the north, and flinging it on his shoulder, rushed across the heath.

Early on the following morning, the inhabitants of Berwick were seen hurrying, in groups, to the spot where the robbery had been committed, and were scattered in every direction around the moor; but no trace of the robbery could be obtained.

Three days had passed, and Sir John Cochrane yet lived. The mail which contained his death-warrant had been robbed; and, before another order for his execution could be given, the intercession of his father, the Earl of Dundonald, with the King's confessor, might be successful. Grizel now became almost his constant companion in prison, and spoke to him words of comfort. Nearly fourteen days had passed since the robbery of the mail had been committed, and protracted hope in the bosom of the prisoner became more bitter than his first despair. But even that hope, bitter as it was, perished. The intercession of his father had been unsuccessful—and a second time the bigoted, and would-be despotic monarch, had signed the warrant for his death, and within little more than another day that warrant would reach his prison.

"The will of Heaven be done!" groaned the captive.

"Amen!" returned Grizel, with wild vehemence; "but my father *shall* not die!"

Again the rider with the mail had reached the moor of Tweedmouth, and a second time he bore with him the doom of Cochrane. He spurred his horse to its utmost speed, he looked cautiously before, behind, and around him; and, in his right hand he carried a pistol ready to defend himself. The moon shed a ghostly light across the heath, rendering desolation visible, and giving a spiritual embodiment to every shrub. He was turning the angle of a straggling copse, when his horse reared at the report of a pistol, the fire of which seemed to dash into its very eyes. At the same moment, his own pistol flashed, and the horse rearing more violently, he was driven from the saddle. In a moment, the foot of the robber was upon his breast, who, bending over him, and brandishing a short dagger in his hand, said—

"Give me thine arms, or die!"

The heart of the King servant failed within him, and, without venturing to reply, he did as he was commanded.

"Now, go thy way," said the robber sternly, "but leave with me thy horse, and leave with me the mail—lest a worse thing come upon thee."

The man therefore arose, and proceeded towards Berwick, trembling; and the robber, mounting the horse which he had left, rode rapidly across the heath.

Preparations were making for the execution of Sir John Cochrane, and the officers of the law waited only for the arrival of the mail with his second death-warrant, to lead him forth to the scaffold, when the tidings arrived that the mail had again been robbed. For yet fourteen days, and the life of the prisoner would be again prolonged. He again fell on the neck of his daughter, and wept, and said—

'It is good—the hand of Heaven is in this!"

"Said I not," replied the maiden—and for the first time she wept aloud—"that my father should not die."

The fourteen days were not yet past, when the prison doors flew open, and the old Earl of Dundonald rushed to the arms of his son. His intercession with the confessor had been at length successful; and, after twice signing the warrant for the execution of Sir John, which had as often failed in reaching its destination, the King had sealed his pardon. He had hurried with his father from the prison to his own house—his family were clinging around him shedding tears of joy—and they were marvelling with gratitude at the mysterious providence that had twice intercepted the mail, and saved his life, when a stranger craved an audience. Sir John desired him to be admitted—and the robber entered. He was habited, as we have before described, with the coarse cloak and coarser jerkin; but his bearing was above his condition. On entering, he slightly touched his beaver, but remained covered.

"When you have perused these," said he, taking two papers from his bosom, "cast them in the fire!"

Sir John glanced on them, started, and became pale—they were his death-warrants.

"My deliverer," exclaimed he, "how shall I thank thee—how repay the saviour of my life! My father—my children—thank him for me!"

The old Earl grasped the hand of the stranger; the children embraced his knees; and he burst into tears.

"By what name," eagerly inquired Sir John, "shall I thank my deliverer?"

The stranger wept aloud; and raising his beaver, the raven tresses of Grizel Cochrane fell upon the coarse cloak.

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed the astonished and enraptured father—"my own child!—my saviour!—my own Grizel!"

It is unnecessary to add more—the imagination of the reader can supply the rest; and, we may only add, that Grizel Cochrane, whose heroism and noble affection we have here hurriedly and imperfectly sketched, was, tradition says the grandmother of the late Sir John Stuart of Allanbank and great-great-grandmother of Mr Coutts, the celebrated banker.*

* Since the author of the "Tales of the Borders" first published the Tale of "Grizel Cochrane," a slightly different version of it appeared in *Chambers' Journal*. There is no reason to doubt the fact of her heroism; but we believe it is incorrect, as is generally affirmed, to say that she was the grandmother of the late Sir John Stuart of Allanbank. Some weeks ago, the author of these Tales received a letter from Sir Hugh Stuart, son of Sir John referred to, stating that his family would be glad to have such a heroine as Grizel connected with their genealogy but that they were unable to prove such connection.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

SAYINGS AND DOINGS

OF

PETER PATERSON.

An every-day biographer would have said that Peter Paterson was the son of pious and respectable parents; and he would have been perfectly right, for the parents of Peter were both pious and respectable. I say they were pious; for, every week-night, as duly as the clock struck nine, and every Sabbath morning and evening, Robin Paterson and his wife Betty called in their man-servant and their maid-servant into what now-a-days would be styled their parlour, and there the voice of Psalms, of reading the Word, and of prayer, was heard; and, moreover, their actions corresponded with their profession. I say also they were respectable; for Robin Paterson rented a farm called Foxlaw, consisting of fifty acres, in which, as his neighbours said, he was "making money like hay"—for land was not three or four guineas an acre in those days. Foxlaw was in the south of Scotland, upon the east coast, and the farm-house stood on the brae-side, within a stone-throw of the sea. The brae on which Foxlaw stood, formed one side of a sort of deep valley or ravine; and at the foot of the valley was a small village, with a few respectable-looking houses scattered here and there in its neighbourhood. Robin and Betty had been married about six years, when, to the exceeding joy of both, Betty brought forth a son, and they called his name Peter—that having been the Christian name of his paternal grandfather. Before he was six weeks old, his mother protested he would be a prodigy; and was heard to say—"See, Robin, man, see!—did ye ever ken the like o' that?—see how he laughs!—he kens his name already!" And Betty and Robin kissed their child alternately, and gloried in his smile. "O Betty," said Robin—for Robin was no common man—"that smile was the first spark o' reason glimmerin' in our infant's soul!—Thank God! the bairn has a' its faculties." At five years old Peter was sent to the village school, where he continued till he was fifteen; and there he was more distinguished as a pugilist than as a book-worm. Nevertheless, Peter contrived almost invariably to remain dux of his class; but this was accounted for by the fact, that, when he made a blunder, no one dared to *trap* him, well knowing that if they had done so, the moment they were out of school, Peter would have made his knuckles acquainted with their seat of superior knowledge. On occasions when he was fairly puzzled, and the teacher would put the question to a boy lower in the class, the latter would tremble and stammer, and look now at his teacher, and now squint at Peter, stammer again, and again look from the one to the other, while Peter would draw his book before his face, and, giving a scowling glent at the stammerer, would give a sort of significant nod to his fist suddenly clenched upon the open page; and when the teacher stamped his foot, and cried, "Speak, sir!" the trembler whimpered, "I daurna, sir." "Ye daurna!" the enraged dominie would cry—"Why?" "Because—because, sir," was slowly stammered out—"Peter Paterson wud *lick* me!" Then would the incensed disciplinarian spring upon Peter; and, grasping him by the collar, whirl his *taws* in the air, and bring them with his utmost strength round the back, sides, and limbs of Peter; but Peter was like a rock, and his eyes more stubborn than a rock; and, in the midst of all, he gazed in the face of his tormentor with a look of imperturbable defiance and contempt. Notwithstanding this course of education, when Peter had attained the age of fifteen, the village instructor found it necessary to call at Foxlaw, and inform Robin Paterson that he could do no more for his son, adding that—"He was fit for the college; and, though he said it, that should not say it, as fit for it as any student that ever entered it." These were glad tidings to a father's heart, and Robin treated the dominie to an extra tumbler. He, however, thought his son was young enough for the college—"We'll wait anither year," said he; "an' Peter can be improvin' himsel at hame; an' ye can gie a look in, Maister, an' advise us to ony kind o' books ye think he should hae—we'll aye be happy to see ye, for ye've done yer duty to him, I'll say that for ye.

So another year passed on, and Peter remained about the farm. He was now sometimes seen with a book in his hand; but more frequently with a gun, and more frequently still with a fishing rod. At the end of the twelve months, Peter positively refused to go to the college. His mother entreated, and his father threatened; but it was labour in vain. At last—"It's o' nae use striving against the stream," said Robin—"ye canna gather berries off a whinbush. Let him e'en tak his ain way, an' he may live to rue it." Thus, Peter went on reading, shooting, fishing, and working about the farm, till he was eighteen. He now began to receive a number of epithets from his neighbours. His old schoolmaster called him "Ne'er-do-weel Peter;" but the dominie was a mere proser; he knew the moods and tenses of a Greek or Latin sentence, but he was incapable of appreciating its soul. Some called him "Poetical Peter," and a few "Prosing Peter;" but the latter were downright bargain-making, pounds-shillings-and-pence men, whose souls were dead to

> "The music of sweet sounds;"

and sensible only of the jink of the coin of the realm. Others called him "*Daft* Peter," for he was the leader of frolic, fun, and harmless mischief; but now the maidens of the village also began to call him "Handsome Peter." Yet, he of whom they thus spoke, would wander for hours alone by the beach of the solitary sea, gazing upon its army of waves warring with the winds, till his very spirit took part in the conflict; or he could look till his eyes got blind on its unruffled bosom, when the morning sun flung over it, from the horizon to the shore, a flash of glory; or, when the moonbeams, like a million torches shooting from the deep.

danced on its undulating billows—then would he stand, like an entranced being, listening to its everlasting anthem, while his soul, awed and elevated by the magnificence of the scene, worshipped God, the Creator of the great sea. With all his reputed wildness, and with all his thoughtlessness, even on the sea-banks, by the wood, and by the brae-side, Peter found voiceless, yet to him eloquent companions. To him the tender primrose was sacred as the first blush of opening womanhood; and he would converse with the lowly daisy, till his gaze seemed to draw out the very soul of

"Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower."

It, however, grieved his mother's spirit to see him, as she said, "Just idling awa his time, and leaving his learning at his heels." His father now said—"Let him just tak his fling an' find his ain weight—an' he'll either mak a spoon or spoil a horn, or my name's no Robin Paterson." But, from Peter's infancy, it had been his mother's ambition and desire to live to see him, as she expressed it, "wag his pow in a poopit," or, at any rate, to see him a gentleman. On one occasion, therefore, when Robin was at Dunse hiring-market, the schoolmaster having called on his old pupil, "Ne'er-do-weel Peter," the two entered into a controversy in the presence of Peter's mother, and, in the course of the discussion, the man of letters was dumfoundered by the fluency and force of the arguments of his young antagonist. Silent tears of exultation stole into Betty's eyes, to hear, as she said, "her bairn expawtiate equal—ay, superior to ony minister;" and no sooner had the teacher withdrawn, than, fixing her admiring eyes on her son, she said—

"O Peter, man, what a delivery ye hae!—an' sae fu' o' the dictioner'! Troth but ye wad cut a fiuger i' the poopit! There wad nae dust gather on your cushion—there wad be nae sleeping, nodding, or snoring, while my Peter was preachin'. An', oh, hinny, but ye will mak me a glad mother, if ye'll consent to gang to the college! Ye wadna be lang o' gettin' a kirk, my man—I can tell ye that: an' if ye'll only consent to gang, ye shanna want pocket-money that your faither kens naething about—my bairn shall appear wi' the best o' them. For syne ever ye was an infant, it has aye been my hope an my prayer, Peter, to see ye a minister; an' I ne'er sent a hunder eggs or a basket o' butter to the market, but Peter's pennies were aye laid aside, to keep his pockets at the college."

Peter was, in the main, a most dutiful and most affectionate son; but on this point he was strangely stubborn; and he replied—

"Wheesht, mother! wheesht! nae mair aboot it."

"Nae mair aboot it, bairn!" said she; "but I maun say mair aboot it;—man! wad ye fling awa your learnin' at a dyke-side, an' yer talents at a pleugh-tail? Wad ye just break yer mother an' faither's heart? O Peter! Peter, man, hae ye nae spirit ava?—What is yer objection?"

"Weel, keep your temper, mother," said he, "an I'll tell ye candidly:—The kirk puts a strait-jacket on a body that I wadna hae elbow-room in!"

"What do ye mean, ye graceless?" added she, in a voice betokening a sort of horror.

"Oh, naething particular; only, for example, sic bits o' scandal as—the Reverend Peter Paterson was called before the session for shooting on his ain glebe—or, the Reverend Peter Paterson was summoned before the presbytery for leistering a salmon at the foot o' Tammy the Miller's dam—or, the Reverend Peter Paterson was ordered to appear before the General Assembly for clappin' Tammy the Miller's servant lassie on the shouther, an' ca'ing her a winsome quean—or"———

"Or!"—exclaimed his impatient and mortified mother—"Oh, ye forward an' profane rascal ye! how daur ye speak in sic a strain—or wad ye be guilty o' sic unministerial conduct?—wad ye disgrace *the coat* by sic ungodly behaviour?"

"There's nae sayin', mother," added he; "but dinna be angry—I'm sure, if I did either shoot, leister, or clap a bonny lassie on the shouther, ye wadna think it unlike your son Peter."

"Weel, weel," said the good-natured matron, softened down by his manner; "it's true your faither says—it's nae use striving against the stream; an' a' gifts arena graces But if ye'll no be a minister, what will ye be? Wad ye no like to be a writer or an advocate?"

"Worse an' worse, mother! I wad rather beg than live on the misery of another."

"Then, callant," added Betty, shaking her head, and sighing as she spoke—"I dinna ken what we'll do wi' ye Will ye no be a doctor?"

"What!" said Peter, laughing, and assuming a theatrical attitude—"an apothecary!—make an apothecary of *me*. and cramp *my* genius over a pestle and mortar? No mother—I will be a farmer, like my father before me."

"Oh, ye ne'er-do-weel, as your maister ca's ye!" said his mother, as she rose and left the room in a passion; "ye'll be a play-actor yet, an' that will be baith seen an' heard tell o', an' bring disgrace on us a'."

Peter was, however, spell-bound to the vicinity of Foxlaw by stronger ties than an aversion to the college or a love for farming. He was about seventeen, when a Mr Graham, with his wife and family, came and took up his residence in one of the respectable-looking houses adjacent to the village. Mr Graham had been a seafaring man—it was reported the master of a small privateer; and in that capacity had acquired, as the villagers expressed it, "a sort o' money." He had a family of several children; but the eldest was a lovely girl called Ann, about the same age as Peter Paterson. Mr Graham was fond of his gun, and so was Peter; they frequently met on the neighbouring moors, and an intimacy sprang up between them. The old sailor also began to love his young companion; for, though a landsman, he had a bold, reckless spirit: he could row, reef, and steer, and swim like an amphibious animal; and, though only a boy, he was acknowledged to be the only boxer, and the best leaper, runner, and wrestler in the country side—moreover, he could listen to a long yarn, and, over a glass of old grog, toss off his heel-taps like a man; and these qualifications drawing the heart of the skipper toward him, he invited him to his house. But here a change came over the spirit of reckless, roving Peter. He saw Ann; and an invisible hand seemed suddenly to strike him on the breast. His heart leaped to his throat. His eyes were riveted. He felt as if a flame passed over his face. Mr Graham told his longest stories, and Peter sat like a simpleton—hearing every word, indeed, but not comprehending a single sentence. His entire soul was fixed on the fair being before him—every sense was swallowed up in sight. Ringlets of a shining brown were parted over her fair brow; but Peter could not have told their colour—her soft blue eyes occasionally met his, but he noted not their hue. He beheld her lovely face, where the rose and the lily were blended—he saw the almost sculptured elegance of her form; yet it was neither on these—on the shining ringlets, nor the soft blue eyes—that his spirit dwelt; but on Ann Graham, their gentle possessor. He felt as he had never felt before; and he knew not wherefore.

Next day, and every day, found Peter at the house of Captain Graham; and often as love's own hour threw its grey mantle over the hills, he was to be seen wandering with the gentle Ann by his side, on the sea-banks, by the beach, and in the unfrequented paths. Again and again, when no eye saw them, and when no ear heard them, he had revealed the fulness of his heart before her; and, in the rapture of the moment, sealed his truth upon her lips; while she, with affection too deep for words, would fling her arm across his shoulder, and hide her face on his breast to conceal the tear of joy and of love.

His parents looked upon Ann as their future daughter; and, with Peter, the course of "true love ran smooth." A farm had been taken in an adjoining parish, on which he was to enter at the following Whitsunday; and, on taking possession of his farm, Ann Graham was to become his bride. Never did exile long more ardently for his native land, than did Peter Paterson for the coming Whitsunday; but, ere it came, the poetical truth was verified, that

"The course of true love *never did* run smooth."

Contiguous to the farm of Foxlaw, lay the estate of one Laird Horslie—a young gentleman but little known in the neighbourhood; for he had visited it but once, and that only for a few weeks, since it came into his possession. All that was known of him was, that he wrote J.P. after his name—that he was a hard landlord, and had the reputation of spending his rents faster than his factor could forward them to him. To him belonged the farm that had been taken for Peter; and it so happened, that, before the Whitsunday which was to make the latter happy arrived, the laird paid a second visit to his estate. At the kirk, on the Sunday, all eyes were fixed on the young laird. Captain Graham was one of his tenants, and occupied a pew immediately behind the square seat of the squire. But, while all eyes were fixed upon Laird Horslie, he turned his back upon the minister, and gazed and gazed again upon the lovely countenance of Ann Graham. All the congregation observed it. Ann blushed and hung her head; but the young squire, with the privilege of a man of property, gazed on unabashed. What was observed by all the rest of the congregation, was not unobserved by Peter. Many, with a questionable expression in their eyes, turned them from the laird, and fixed them upon him. Peter observed this also, and his soul was wroth. His face glowed like a furnace; he stood up in his seat, and his teeth were clenched together. His fist was once or twice observed to be clenched also; and he continued scowling on the laird, wishing in his heart for ability to annihilate him with a glance.

Next day, the squire called upon the old skipper, and he praised the beauty of Ann in her own presence, and in the presence of her parents. But there was nothing particular in this; for he called upon all his tenants, he chatted with them, tasted their bottle, paid compliments to their daughters, and declared that their sons did honour to

"Scotland's glorious peasantry."

Many began to say, that the laird was "a nice young gentleman"—that he had been "wickedly misca'ed;" and the factor "got the wyte o' a'." His visits to Mr Graham's cottage, however, were continued day after day; and his attentions to Ann became more and more marked. A keen sportsman himself, he was the implacable enemy of poachers, and had strictly prohibited shooting on his estate; but, to the old skipper, the privilege was granted of shooting when and where he pleased. Instead, therefore, of seeing Peter Paterson and the old seaman in the fields together, it was no uncommon thing to meet the skipper and the squire. The affection of the former, indeed, had wonderfully cooled towards his intended son-in-law. Peter saw and felt this; and the visits of the squire were wormwood to his spirit. If they did not make him jealous, they rendered him impatient, impetuous, miserable.

He was wandering alone upon the shore, at the hour which Hogg calls, "between the gloamin' and the mirk," in one of these impatient, impetuous, and unhappy moods, when he resolved not to live in a state of torture and anxiety until Whitsunday, but to have the sacred knot tied at once.

Having so determined, Peter turned towards Graham's cottage. He had not proceeded far, when he observed a figure gliding before him on the footpath, leading from the village to the cottage. Darkness was gathering fast, but he at once recognised the form before him to be that of his own Ann. She was not a hundred yards before him, and he hastened forward to overtake her; but, as the proverb has it, there is much between the cup and the lip. A part of the footpath ran through a young plantation, and this plantation Ann Graham was just entering, when observed by Peter. He also had entered the wood, when his progress was arrested for a moment by the sudden sound of voices. It was Ann's voice, and it reached his ear in tones of anger and reproach; and these were tones so new to him, as proceeding from one whom he regarded as all gentleness and love, that he stood involuntarily still. The words he could not distinguish; but, after halting for an instant, he pushed softly but hastily forward, and heard the voice of the young laird reply—

"A rose-bud in a fury, by the goddesses!—Nay, frown not, fairest," continued he, throwing his arm around her and adding—

"What pity that so delicate a form
Should be devoted to the rude embrace
Of some indecent clown!"

Peter heard this, and muttered an oath or an ejaculation which we will not write.

"Sir," said Ann, indignantly, and struggling as she spoke, "if you have the fortune of a gentleman, have, at least, the decency of a man."

"Nay, sweetest; but you, having the beauty of an angel, have the heart of a woman." And he attempted to kiss her cheek.

"Laird Horslie!" shouted Peter, as if an earthquake had burst at the heels of the squire—"hands off!—I say, hands off!"

Now, Peter did not exactly suit the action to the word; for, while he yet exclaimed, "hands off!" he, with both hands, clutched the laird by the collar, and hurling him across the path, caused him to roll like a ball against the foot of a tree.

"Fellow!" exclaimed Horslie, furiously, rising on his knee, and rubbing his sores——

"Fellow!" interrupted Peter—"confound ye, sir, dinna *fellow* me, or there'll be *fellin'* in the way. You can keep yer farm, and be hanged to ye; and let me tell ye, sir, if ye were ten thousand lairds, if ye dared to lay yer ill-faur'd lips on a sweetheart o' mine, I wad twist yer neck about like a turnip-shaw!—Come awa, Annie, love," added he, tenderly, "and be thankfu' I cam in the way."

Before they entered the house, he had obtained her consent to their immediate union; but the acquiescence of the old skipper was still wanting; and when Peter made known his wishes to him—

"Belay!" cried the old boy; "not so fast, Master Peter; a craft such as my girl, is worth a longer run, lad. Time enough to take her in tow, when you've a harbour to moor her in, Master Peter. There may be other cutters upon the coast, too, that will give you a race for her, and that have got what I call *shot* in their lockers. So you can take in a reef, my lad; and, if you don't like it, why—helm about—that's all."

"Captain Graham," said Peter, proudly and earnestly, "I both understand and feel your remarks; and, but for Ann's sake, I would resent them also. But, sir, you are a faither—you are an affectionate one—dinna be a deluded one. By a side-wind, ye hae flung my poverty in my teeth; but, sir, if I hae poverty, and Laird Horslie riches, I hae loved yer dochter as a man—he seeks to destroy her like a villain."

"'Vast, Peter, 'vast!" cried the old man; "mind I am Ann's father—tell me what you mean."

"I mean, sir, that ye hae been hoodwinked," added the other—"that ye hae been flung aff yer guard, and led to the precipice o' the deep dark sea o' destruction an' disgrace; that a villain has hovered round yer house, like a hawk round a wood-pigeon's nest, waiting an opportunity to destroy yer peace for ever! Sir to use a phrase o

yer ain, wad ye behold yer dochter driven a ruined wreck upon the world's bleak shore, the discarded property o' the lord o' the manor? If ye doubt me, as to the rascal's intentions, ask Ann hersel."

"'Sdeath, Peter, man!" cried the old tar, "do ye say that the fellow has tried to make a marine of me?—that a lubber has got the weathergage of Bill Graham? Call in Ann."

Ann entered the room where her father and Peter sat.

"Ann, love," said the old man, "I know you are a true girl; you know Squire Horslie, and you know he comes here for you; now, tell me at once, dear—I say, tell me what you think of him?"

"I think," replied she, bursting into tears—"I *know* he is a villain!"

"You know it!" returned he; "blow me, have I harboured a shark! What! the salt water in my girl's eyes, too! If I thought he had whispered a word in your ear, but the thing that was honourable—hang me! I would warm the puppy's back with a round dozen with my own hand."

"You have to thank Peter," said she, sobbing, "for rescuing me to-night from his unmanly rudeness."

"What! saved you from his rudeness!—you didn't tell me that, Peter; well, well, my lad, you have saved an old sailor from being drifted on a rock. There's my hand—forgive me—get Ann's, and God bless you!"

Within three weeks, all was in readiness for the wedding. At Foxlaw, old Betty was, as she said, up to the elbows in preparation, and Robin was almost as happy as his son: for Ann was loved by every one. It was Monday evening, and the wedding was to take place next day. Peter was too much of a sportsman, not to have game upon the table at his marriage feast. He took his gun, and went among the fields. He had traversed over the fifty acres of Foxlaw in vain, when, in an adjoining field, the property of his rival, he perceived a full-grown hare holding his circuitous gambols. It was a noble-looking animal. The temptation was irresistible. He took aim; and the next moment bounded over the low hedge. He was a dead shot; and he had taken up the prize, and was holding it, surveying it before him, when Mr Horslie and his gamekeeper sprang upon him, and, ere he was aware, their hands were on his breast. Angry words passed, and words rose to blows. Peter threw the hare over his shoulders, and left the squire and his gamekeeper to console each other on the ground. He returned home; but nothing said he of his second adventure with Laird Horslie.

The wedding-day dawned; and, though the village had no bells to ring, there were not wanting demonstrations of rejoicing; and, as the marriage party passed through its little street to the manse, children shouted, women waved ribbons, and smiled, and every fowling-piece and pistol in the place sent forth a joyful noise; yea, the village Vulcan himself, as they passed his smithy, stood with a rod of red-hot iron in his hand, and having his stithies ranged before him like a battery, and charged with powder, saluted them with a rustic but hearty *feu d'joie*. There was not a countenance but seemed to bless them. Peter was the very picture of manly joy—Ann of modesty and love. They were within five yards of the manse, where the minister waited to pronounce over them the charmed and holy words, when Squire Horslie's gamekeeper and two constables intercepted the party.

"You are our prisoner," said one of the latter, producing his warrant, and laying his hand upon Peter.

Peter's cheek grew pale; he stood silent and motionlesss, as if palsy had smitten his very soul. Ann uttered a short, sudden scream of despair, and fell senseless at the feet of the "best-man." Her cry of agony recalled the bridegroom to instant consciousness; he started round—he raised her in his arms, he held her to his bosom. "Ann!—my ain Ann!" he cried; "look up—oh, look up, dear! It is me, Ann!—they canna, they daurna harm me."

Confusion and dismay took possession of the whole party.

"What is the meaning o' this, sirs?" said Robin Paterson, his voice half choked with agitation; "what has my son done, that ye choose sic an untimeous hour to bring a warrant against him?"

"He has done, old boy, what will give him employment for seven years," said the gamekeeper, insolently. "Constables, do your duty."

"Sirs," said Robin, as they again attempted to lay hands upon his son, "I am sure he has been guilty o' nae crime—leave us noo, an', whatever be his offence his faither, will be answerable for his forthcoming to the last penny in my possession."

"And I will be bail to the same amount master constables," said the old skipper; "for, blow me, d'ye see, if there an't black work at the bottom o' this, and somebody shall hear about it, that's all."

Consciousness had returned to the fair bride. She threw her arms around Peter's neck—"They shall not—no, they shall not take you from me!" she exclaimed.

"No, no, dear," returned he; "dinna put yersel' about."

The minister had come out of the manse, and offered to join the old men as security for Peter's appearance on the following day.

"To the devil with your bail!—you are no justices master constables," replied the inexorable gamekeeper—"seize him instantly."

"Slave!" cried Peter, raising his hand and grasping the other by the throat.

"Help! help, in the king's name!" shouted the provincial executors of the law, each seizing him by the arm.

"Be quiet, Peter, my man," said his father, clapping his shoulder, and a tear stole down his cheek as he spoke; "dinna mak bad worse."

"A rescue, by Harry!—a rescue!" cried the old skipper.

"No, no," returned Peter—"no rescue; if it cam to that, I wad need nae assistance. Quit my arms, sirs, and I'll accompany ye in peace. Ann, love—fareweel the noo, an Heaven bless you, dearest!—but dinna greet, hinny—dinna greet!" And he pressed his lips to hers. "Help her, faither—help her," added he; "see her hame, and try to comfort her."

The old man placed his arm tenderly round her waist—she clung closer to her bridegroom's neck; and, as they gently lifted up her hands, she uttered a heart-piercing, and, it seemed, a heart-broken scream, that rang down the valley, like the wail of desolation. Her head dropped upon her bosom. Peter hastily raised her hand to his lips; then, turning to the myrmidons of the law, said sternly—"I am ready, sirs; lead me where you will."

I might describe to you the fears, the anguish, and the agony of Peter's mother, as, from the door of Foxlaw, she beheld the bridal party return to the village. "Bless me, are they back already!—can onything hae happened the minister?" was her first exclamation; but she saw the villagers collecting around them in silent crowds; she beheld the women raising their hands, as if stricken with dismay; the joy that had greeted them a few minutes before was dead, and the very children seemed to follow in sorrow "Oh, bairn!" said she to the serving maid, who stood beside her, "saw ye e'er the like o' yon? Rin doun an' see what's happened; for my knees are sinking under me." The next moment she beheld her husband and Captain Graham supporting the unwedded bride in their arms. They approached not to Foxlaw; but turned to the direction of the Captain's cottage. A dimness came over the mother's eyes—for a moment they sought her son, but found him not. "Gracious Heaven!" she cried, wringing her hands, "what's this come owre us!" She rushed forward—the valley, the village, and the joyless bridal party, floated round before her—her heart was sick with agony, and she fell with her face upon the earth.

The next day found Peter in Greenlaw jail. He had not

only been detected in the act of poaching; but a violent assault, as it was termed, against one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace, was proved against him; and, before his father or his friends could visit him, he was hurried to Leith, and placed on board a frigate about to sail from the Roads. He was made of sterner stuff than to sink beneath oppression; and, though his heart yearned for the mourning bride from whose arms he had been torn, and he found it hard to brook the imperious commands and even insolence of men "dressed in a little brief authority;" yet, as the awkwardness of a landsman began to wear away, and the tumult of his feelings to subside, his situation became less disagreeable; and, before twelve months had passed, Peter Paterson was a favourite with every one on board.

At the time we speak of, some French privateers had annoyed the fishing smacks employed in carrying salmon from Scotland to London; and the frigate on board of which Peter had been sent, was cruising to and fro in quest of them. One beautiful summer evening, when the blue sea was smooth as a mirror, the winds seemed dead, and the very clouds slept motionless beneath the blue sky, the frigate lay becalmed in a sort of bay within two miles of the shore. Well was that shore known to Peter; he was familiar with the appearance of every rock—with the form of every hill—with the situation of every tree—with the name of every house and its inhabitants. It was the place of his birth; and, before him, the setting sun shed its evening rays upon his father's house, and upon the habitation of her whom he regarded as his wife. He leaned anxiously over the proud bulwarks of the vessel, gazing till his imprisoned soul seemed ready to burst from his body, and mingle with the objects it loved. The sun sank behind the hills—the big tears swelled in his eyes—indistinctness gathered over the shore—he wrung his hands in silence and in bitterness. He muttered in agony, the name of his parents, and the name of her he loved. He felt himself a slave. He dashed his hand against his forehead—"O Heaven!" he exclaimed aloud, "thy curse upon mine enemy!"

"Paterson!" cried an officer, who had observed him, and overheard his exclamation; "are you mad? See him below," continued he, addressing another seaman; "the fellow appears deranged"

"I am not mad, your honour," returned Peter, though his look and his late manner almost belied his words; and, briefly telling his story, he begged permission to go on shore. The frigate, however, was considered as his prison, and his place of punishment; when sent on board, he had been described as "a dangerous character"—his recent bitter prayer or imprecation went far in confirmation of that description; and his earnest request was refused.

Darkness silently stretched its dull curtain over earth and sea—still the wind slept as a cradled child, and the evening star, like a gem on the bosom of night, threw its pale light upon the land. Peter had again crept upon the deck; and, while the tears yet glistened in his eyes, he gazed eagerly towards the shore, and on the star of hope and of love. It seemed like a lamp from Heaven suspended over his father's house—the home of his heart, and of his childhood. He felt as though it at once invited him to the scene of his young affections, and lighted the way. For the first time, he gathering tears rolled down his cheeks. He bent his knees—he clasped his hands in silent prayer—one desperate resolution had taken possession of his soul; and the next moment he descended gently into the silent sea. He dived by the side of the vessel; and, ascending at the distance of about twenty yards, strained every nerve for the shore.

It was about day-dawn, when Robin Paterson and his wife were aroused by the loud barking of their farm-dog; but the sound suddenly ceased, as if the watch-dog were familiar with the intruder; and a gentle tapping was heard at the window of the room where they slept.

"Wha's there?" inquired Betty.

"A friend—an old friend," was replied in a low and seemingly disguised voice.

But there was no disguising the voice of a lost son to a mother's ear.

"Robin! Robin!" she exclaimed—"it is *him!*—Oh, it is *him!*—Peter!—my bairn!"

In an instant, the door flew open, and Peter Paterson stood on his parents' hearth, with their arms around his neck, while their tears were mingled together.

After a brief space wasted in hurried exclamations, inquiries, and tears of joy and surprise—"Come, hinny," said the anxious mother, "let me get ye changed, for ye're wet through and through. Oh, come, my man, and we'll hear a' thing by and by—or ye'll get yer death o' cauld, for ye're droukit into the very skin. But, preserve us, bairn! ye hae neither a hat to yer head, nor a coat to yer back! O Peter, hinny, what is't—what's the matter?—tell me what's the meaning o't."

"O mother, do not ask me!—I have but a few minutes to stop. Faither, ye can understand me—I maun go back to the ship again; if I stay, they will be after me."

O Peter!—Peter, man!" exclaimed Robin, weeping as he spoke, and pressing his son's hand between his—"what's this o't!—yes, yes, yer faither understands ye! But is it no possible to hide?"

"No, no, faither!" replied he—"dinna think o't."

"O bairn!" cried Betty, "what is't ye mean? Wad ye leave yer mother again? Oh! if ye kenned what I've suffered for yer sake, ye wadna speak o't."

"O mother!" exclaimed Peter, dashing his hand before his face, "this is worse than death! But I must!—I must go back, or they would tear me from you. Yet, before I do go, I would see my poor Ann."

"Ye shall see her—see her presently," cried Betty; "and baith her and yer mother will gang doun on oor knees to ye, Peter, if ye'll promise no to leave us."

"Haste ye, then, Betty," said Robin, anxiously; "rin awa owre to Mr Graham's as quick as ye can; for, though ye no understand it, I see there's nae chance for poor Peter but to tak horse for it before the sun's up."

Hastily the weeping mother flew towards Mr Graham's. Robin, in spite of the remonstrances of his son, went out to saddle a horse on which he might fly. The sun had not yet risen when Peter beheld his mother, his betrothed bride, and her father, hurrying towards Foxlaw. He rushed out to meet them—to press the object of his love to his heart. They met—their arms were flung around each other.

A loud huzza burst from a rising ground between them and the beach. The old skipper started round. He beheld a boat's crew of the frigate, with their pistols levelled towards himself, his unhappy daughter, and her hapless bridegroom!

"O Ann, woman!" exclaimed Peter, wildly, "this is terrible! it is mair than flesh and blood can stand!"

"Peter! O Peter!" cried the wretched girl, clinging around him.

The party from the frigate approached them. Even their hearts were touched.

"From my soul, I feel for you, Paterson," said the lieutenant commanding them; "and I am sorry to see these old people and that lovely girl in distress; but you know I must do my duty, lad."

"O Sir! Sir!" cried his mother, wringing her hands, and addressing the lieutenant, "if ye hae a drap o' compassion in yer heart, spare my puir bairn! O Sir! I implore ye, as ye wad expect mercy here or hereafter, dinna tear him frae the door o' the mother that bore him."

"Good woman," replied the officer, "your son must go with us; but I shall do all that I can to render his punishment as light as possible."

Ann uttered a shriek of horror.

"Punishment!" exclaimed Betty, grasping the arm of the lieutenant—"O Sir, what do ye mean by punishment? Surely, though your heart was harder than a nether mill-stane, ye couldna be sae cruel as to hurt my bairn for comin' to see his ain mother."

Sir," said Robin, "my son never intended to rin awa frae your ship. He told me he was gaun to return immediately—I assure ye o' that. But, sir, if ye could only leave him, and if siller can do onything in the case, ye shall hae the savings o' thirty years, an' a faither's blessing into the bargain."

"Oh, ay, sir!" cried his mother; "ye shall hae the last penny we hae i' the world—ye shall hae the very stock off the farm, if ye'll leave my bairn!"

The officer shook his head. The sailors attempted to pinion Peter's arms.

"'Vast there, shipmates! 'vast!" said Peter, sorrowfully; "there is no need for that; had I intended to run for it, you would not have found me here. Ann, love"——he added—his heart was too full for words—he groaned—he pressed his teeth upon his lip—he wrung her hand. He grasped the hands of his parents and of Mr Graham—he burst into tears, and in bitterness exclaimed, "Farewell!" I will not describe the painful scene, nor paint the silent agony of the father, the heart-rending lamentations of the bereaved mother, nor the tears and anguish of the miserable maiden who refused to be comforted.

Peter was taken to the boat, and conveyed again to the frigate. His officers sat in judgment upon his offence, and Peter stood as a culprit before them. He begged to be heard in his defence, and his prayer was granted.

"I know, your honours," said Peter, "that I have been guilty of a breach of discipline; but I deny that I had any intention of running from the service. Who amongst you that has a heart to feel, would not, under the same circumstances, have acted as I did? Who that has been torn from a faither's hearth, would not brave danger, or death itself, again to take a faither by the hand, or to fling his arms around a mother's neck? Or who that has plighted his heart and his troth to one that is dearer than life, would not risk life for her sake? Gentlemen, it becomes not man to punish an act which Heaven has not registered as a crime. You may flog, torture, and degrade me—I do not supplicate for mercy—but will degradation prompt me to serve my king more faithfully? I know you must do your duty, but I know also you will do it as British officers—as men who have hearts to feel."

During this address, Peter had laid aside his wonted provincial accent. There was an evident leaning amongst the officers in his favour, and the punishment they awarded him was a few days' confinement.

It was during the second war between Britain and the United States. The frigate was ordered to the coast of Newfoundland. She had cruised upon the station about three months; and, during that time, as the seamen said—"not a lubber of the enemy had dared to shew his face—there was no *life* going at all;" and they were becoming impatient for a friendly set-to with their brother Jonathan. It was Peter's watch at the mast-head. "A sail!—a Yankee!" shouted Peter. A sort of wild hurra burst from his comrades on the deck. An officer hastily ascended the rigging to ascertain the fact. "All's right," he cried—"a sixty-gun ship, at least.

"Clear the deck, my boys, cried the commander; 'get the guns in order—active—be steady, and down upon her."

Within ten minutes, all was in readiness for action. "Then down on the deck, my lads," cried the captain; "not a word amongst you—give them a British welcome."

The brave fellows silently knelt by the guns, glowing with impatience for the command to be given to open their fire upon the enemy. The Americans seemed nothing loath to meet them half way. Like winged engines of death rushing to shower destruction on each other, the proud vessels came within gunshot. The American opened the first fire upon the frigate. Several shot had passed over her, and some of the crew were already wounded. Still no word escaped from the lips of the British commander. At length he spoke a word in the ear of the man at the helm, and the next moment the frigate was brought across the bow of the enemy. "Now, my lads," cried the captain, "now give them it." An earthquake seemed to burst at his words—the American was raked fore and aft, and the dead and dying, and limbs of the wounded, strewed her deck. The enemy quickly brought their vessel round—then followed the random gun, and anon the heavy broadsides were poured into each other. For an hour the action had continued, but victory or death seemed the determination of both parties. Both ships were crippled, and had become almost unmanageable, and in each, equal courage and seamanship were displayed It was drawing towards nightfall, they became entangled, and the word "to board!" was given by the commander of the frigate. Peter Paterson was the first man who, cutlass in hand, sprang upon the deck of the American. He seemed to possess a lion's strength, and more than a lion's ferocity. In a few minutes, four of the enemy had sunk beneath his weapon. "On, my hearties!—follow Paterson!" cried an officer; "Peter's a hero!" Fifty Englishmen were engaged hand to hand with the crew of the American; and for a time they gained ground; but they were opposed with a determination equal to their own, and, overpowered by a superiority of numbers, they were driven back and compelled to leap again into the frigate. At the moment his comrades were repulsed, Peter was engaged with the first lieutenant of the American—"Stop a minute!" shouted Peter, as he beheld them driven back; "keep your ground till I finish this fellow!" His request was made in vain, and he was left alone on the enemy's deck; but Peter could turn his back upon no man. "It lies between you and me now, friend," said he to his antagonist. He had shivered the sword of the lieutenant by the hilt, when a Yankee seaman, armed with a crowbar, felled Peter to the deck.

Darkness came on and the vessels separated. The Americans were flinging their dead into the sea—they lifted the body of Peter. His hands moved—the supposed dead man groaned. They again placed him on the deck. He at length looked round in bewilderment. He raised himself on his side. "I say, neighbours," said he to the group around him, "is this *our* ship or *yours?*" The Americans made merry at Peter's question. "Well," continued he, "if it be yours, I can only tell you it was foul play that did it. It was a low, cowardly action, to fell a man behind his back; but come face to face, and twa at a time if ye like, and I'll clear the decks o' the whole ship's crew o' you."

"You are a noble fellow," said the lieutenant whom he had encountered, "and if you will join our service, I guess your merit shan't be long without promotion."

"What!" cried Peter, "raise my right hand against my ain country! Gude gracious, sir! I wad sooner eat it as my next meal!"

In a few weeks the vessel put into Boston for repairs; and on her arrival, it was ascertained that peace had been concluded between the two countries. Peter found himself once more at liberty; but with liberty he found himself in a strange land, without a sixpence in his pocket. This was no enviable situation to be placed in, even in America, renowned as it is as the paradise of the unfortunate, and he was standing, on the second morning after his being put on shore, counting the picturesque islands which stud Boston harbour, for his breakfast, poor fellow, when a person accosted him—"Well, my lad, how is the new world using you?" Peter started round—it was his old adversary the lieutenant

"A weel-filled pocket, sir, returned Peter, "will mak either the new warld or the auld use you weel; and without that, I reckon your usage in either the ane or the ither wad be naething to mak a sang about."

The lieutenant pulled out his purse—"I am not rich, Paterson," said he; "but, perhaps, I can assist a brave man in need." Peter was prevailed upon to accept a few dollars. He knew that to return to Berwickshire was again to throw himself into the power of his persecutor, and he communed with himself what to do. He could plough—he could manage a farm—he was master of all field-work; and, within a week, he engaged himself as a farm-servant to a proprietor in the neighbourhood of Charleston. He had small reason, however, to be in love with his new employment. Peter was proud and high-minded, (in the English, not the American acceptation of the word,) and he found his master an imperious, avaricious, republican tyrant. The man's conduct ill-accorded with his professions of universal liberty. His wish seemed to be, to level all down to his own standard, that he might the more easily trample on all beneath him. His incessant cry, from the rising of the sun until its setting, was, "Work! work!" and with an oath he again called upon his servants to "work!" He treated them as beasts of burden. "Work! hang ye, work!" and a few oaths, seemed to be the principal words in the man's vocabulary. Peter had not been overwrought in the frigate—he had been his own master at Foxlaw—and, when doing his utmost, he hated to hear those words everlastingly rung in his ear. But he had another cause for abhorring his employment; his master had a number of slaves, on whom he wreaked the full measure of his cruelty. There was one, an old man, in particular, on whom he almost every day gratified his savageness. Peter had beheld the brutal treatment of the old negro till he could stand it no longer; and one day, when he was vainly imploring the man who called himself the owner of his flesh for mercy, Peter rushed forward, he seized the savage by the breast, and exclaimed—"Confound ye, sir, if I see ye strike that poor auld black creature again, I'll cleave ye to the chin."

The slave-owner trembled with rage. "What!" said he—"it's a fine thing, indeed, if we've wollopped the English for liberty, and, after all, a man an't to have the liberty of wollopping his own neeger!"

He drew out his purse, and flung Peter's wages contemptuously on the ground. Peter, stooping, placed the money in his pocket, and, turning towards Charleston, proceeded along the bridge to Boston. He had seen enough of tilling another man's fields in America, and resolved to try his fortune in some other way, but was at a loss how to begin. I have already told you how Peter's mother praised his delivery in his debate with the schoolmaster; and Peter himself thought that he could deliver a passage from Shakspeare in a manner that would make the fortune of any hero of the sock and buskin; and he was passing along the Mall, counting the number of trees in every row, much in the same manner, and for the same reason, as he had formerly counted the islands in the harbour, when the thought struck him that the Americans were fond of theatricals; and he resolved to try the stage. He called at the lodgings of the manager in Franklin Place. He gave a specimen of his abilities; and, at a salary of eighteen dollars a-week, Peter Paterson was engaged as leader of the "heavy business" of the Boston *corps dramatique*. The tidings would have killed his mother. Lear was chosen as the part in which he was to make his first appearance. The curtain was drawn up. "Peter, what would your mother say?" whispered his conscience, as he looked in the glass, just as the bell rang and the prompter called him; and what, indeed, would Betty Paterson have said to have seen her own son Peter, with a red cloak, a painted face, a grey wig, and a white beard falling on his breast! Lear—Peter—entered. He looked above, below, and around him. The audience clapped their hands, shouted, and clapped their hands again. It was to cheer the new performer. Peter thought they would bring down the theatre. The lights dazzled his eyes. The gallery began to swim—the pit moved—the boxes appeared to wave backward and forward. Peter became pale through the very rouge that bedaubed his face, and sweet, cold as icicles, rained down his temples. The shouting and the clapping of hands was resumed—he felt a trembling about his limbs—he endeavoured to look upon the audience—he could discern only a confused mass. The noise again ceased.

"Attend——France——Burgundy——hem!——Gloster!" faltered out poor Peter. The laughter became louder than the clapping of hands had been before. The manager led Peter off the stage, paid him the half of his week's salary, and wished him good-by. It is unnecessary to tell you how Peter, after this disappointment, laid out eight dollars in the purchase of a pack, and how, as pedlar, he travelled for two years among the Indians and back-settlers of Canada, and how he made money in his new calling. He had written to his parents and to Ann Graham; but, in his unsettled way of life, it is no wonder that he had not received an answer. He had written again to say, that, in the course of four months, he would have to be in New York *in the way of business*—for Peter's pride would not permit him to acknowledge that he carried a pack—and if they addressed their letters to him at the Post-office there, he would receive them. He had been some weeks in New York, and called every day, with an anxious heart, at the Post-office. But his time was not lost; he had obtained many rare and valuable skins from the Indians, and, with his shop upon his back, he was doing more business than the most fashionable store-keeper in the Broadway. At length, a letter arrived. Peter hastily opened the seal, which bore the impress of his mother's thimble, and read:—"My dear bairn,—This comes to inform ye that baith your faither and me are weel—thanks to the Giver o' a' good—and hoping to find ye the same. O Peter, hinny, could ye only come hame—did you only ken what sleepless nights I spend on your account, ye wad leave America as soon as ye get my letter. I wonder that ye no ken that Ann, poor woman, an' her faither an' her mother, an' the family, a' gaed to about America mair than a year and a half syne, and I'm surprised ye haena seen them."

"Ann in America!" cried Peter. He was unable to read the remainder of his mother's letter. He again flung his pack upon his shoulder, but not so much to barter and to sell, as to seek his betrothed bride. He visited almost every city in the States, and in the provinces of British America. He advertised for her in more than fifty newspapers; but his search was fruitless—it was "Love's labour lost." Yet, during his search, the world prospered with Peter. His pack had made him rich. He opened a store in New York. He became also a shareholder in canals, and a proprietor of steam-boats; in short, he was looked upon as one of the most prosperous men in the city. But his heart yearned for his native land; and Peter Paterson, Esq., turned his property into cash, and embarked for Liverpool.

Ten long years had passed since the eyes of Betty Paterson had looked upon her son; and she was busied, on a winter day, feeding her poultry in the barn-yard, when she observed a post-chaise drive through the village, and begin to ascend the hill towards Foxlaw.

"Preserve us, Robin!" she cried, as she bustled into the house, "there's a coach comin' here—what can folk in a coach want wi' the like o' us? Haud awa out an' see what they want, till I fling on a clean mutch an' an apron, an' mak mysel wiselike."

"I watna wha it can be," said Robin, as he rose and went towards the door.

The chaise drew up—a tall genteel-looking man alighted

from it—at the first glance he seemed nearly forty years of age, but he was much younger. As he approached, Robin started back—his heart sprang to his throat—his tongue faltered.

"Pe—Pe—Peter!" he exclaimed. The stranger leaped forward, and fell upon the old man's neck.

Betty heard the word *Peter!*—the clean cap fell from her hand, she uttered a scream of joy, and rushed to the door, her grey hairs falling over her face; and the next moment her arms encircled her son.

I need not tell you of the thousand anxious questions of the fond mother, and how she wept as he hinted at the misfortunes he had encountered, and smiled, and wept, and grasped his hand again, as he dwelt upon his prosperity.

"Did I no aye say," exclaimed she, "that I would live to see my Peter a gentleman?"

"Yet, mother," said Peter, "riches cannot bring happiness—at least not to me, while I can hear nothing of poor Ann. Can no one tell to what part of America her father went?—for I have sought them everywhere."

"Oh, forgie me, hinny," cried Betty, bitterly; "it was a mistake o' yer mother's a'thegither. I understand, now, it wasna Americ*a*, they gaed to; but it was Jamaic*a*, or some *ca*, and we hear they're back again."

"Not America!" said Peter: "and back again!—then, where—where shall I find her?"

"When we wrote to you, that, after leaving here, they had gaen to America," said Robin, "it was understood they had gaen there—at ony rate, they went abroad someway—and we never heard, till the other week, that they were back to this country, and are now about Liverpool, where I'm very sorry to hear they are very ill off; for the warld, they say, has gaen a' wrang wi' the auld man."

This was the only information Peter could obtain. They were bitter tidings; but they brought hope with them.

"Ye were saying that ye was in Liverpool the other day," added his mother; "I wonder ye didna see some o' them!"

Peter's spirit was sad, yet he almost smiled at the simplicity of his parent; and he resolved to set out in quest of his betrothed on the following day.

Leaving Foxlaw, we shall introduce the reader to Sparling Street, in Liverpool. Amongst the miserable cellars where the poor are crowded together, and where they are almost without light and without air, one near the foot of the street was distinguished by its outward cleanliness; and in the window was a ticket with the words—"*A Girl's School kept here, by* A. Graham." Over this humble cellar was a boarding-house, from which, ever and anon, the loud laugh of jolly seamen rang boisterous as on their own element. By a feeble fire in the comfortless cellar, sat an emaciated, and apparently dying man; near him sat his wife, engaged in making such articles of apparel as the slop-dealers send to the West Indies, and near the window was a pale but beautiful young woman, instructing a few children in needle-work and the rudiments of education. The children being dismissed, she began to assist her mother; and, addressing her father, said—

"Come, cheer up, dear father—do not give way to despondency—we shall see better times. Come, smile now, and I will sing your favourite song."

"Heaven bless thee, my own sweet child!" said the old man, while the tears trickled down his cheeks. "Thou wilt sing to cheer me, wilt thou?—bless thee!—bless thee! It is enough that, in my old age, I eat thy bread, my child!—sing not!—sing not!—there is no music now for thy father's heart."

"Oh, speak not—think not thus, she cried, tenderly; "you make me sad,too."

"I would not make thee sad, love," returned he, "but it is hard—it is very hard—that, after cruising till I had made a fortune, as I may say, and after being anchored in safety, to be tempted to make another voyage, where my all was wrecked—and not only all wrecked but my little ones too—thy brothers and thy sisters, Ann—to see them struck down one after another, and I hardly left wherewith to bury them—it is hard to bear, child!—and, worse than all, to be knocked up like a useless hulk, and see thee and thy mother toiling and killing themselves for me—it is more than a father's heart can stand, Ann."

"Nay, repine not, father," said she: "He who tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb, will not permit adversity to press on us more hardly than he gives us strength to endure it. Though we suffer poverty, our exertions keep us above want."

The old woman turned aside her head and wept.

"True, dear," added he, "thy exertions keep us from charity; but those exertions my child will not long be able to make—I see it—I feel it! And, oh, Ann, shall I see thee and thy mother inmates of a workhouse—shall I hear men call thy father, Bill Graham, the old pauper?"

The sweat broke upon the old man's brow from his excitment; his daughter strove to soothe him, and, with an assumed playfulness, commenced singing Skinner's beautiful old man's song, beginning—

"Oh, why should old age so much wound us!"

Now, Peter Paterson had been several days in Liverpool, anxiously inquiring for Captain Graham, but without obtaining any information of him or of his daughter, or where they dwelt. Again and again he had wandered along the docks; and he was disconsolately passing up Sparling Street, when the loud revelry of the seamen in the boarding-house attracted his attention. It reminded him of old associations; he paused for a moment, and glanced upon the house and, as the pealing laughter ceased, a low, sweet voice, pouring forth a simple Scottish air, reached his ear. Peter now stood still. He listened—"That voice!" he exclaimed audibly, and he shook as he spoke. He looked down towards the cellar—the ticket in the window caught his eye. He read the words, "*A Girl's School kept here, by* A. Graham." "I have found her!" he cried, clasping his hands together. He rushed down the few steps, he stood in the midst of them—"I have found her!" he repeated, as he entered. His voice fell like a sunbeam on the cheerless heart of the fair vocalist. "Peter!—my own"——she exclaimed, starting to her feet. She could not utter more; she would have fallen to the ground, but Peter caught her in his arms.

I need not describe the scene that followed: that night they left the hovel which had served as a grave for their misfortunes. Within a week they had arrived at Foxlaw, and within a month old and young in the village danced at a joyful wedding. I may only add, that, a few weeks after his marriage, Peter read in the papers an advertisement, headed—"Upset Price Greatly Reduced—*Desirable Property in the neighbourhood of Foxlaw*," &c. It was the very farm now offered for sale of which Peter was to have become a tenant some twelve years before, and was the remnant of the estates of the hopeful Laird Herslie; and Peter became the purchaser. The old skipper regained his wonted health and cheerfulness; and Betty Paterson lived to tell her grandchildren, "she aye said their faither wad be a gentleman, and her words cam true." Even the old schoolmaster, who had styled him, "Ne'er-do-weel Peter," said, he "had aye predicted o' Mr Paterson, even when a callant that he would turn out an extraordinary man."

WILSONS

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS

THE PRODIGAL SON.

The early sun was melting away the coronets of grey clouds on the brows of the mountains, and the lark, as if proud of its plumage, and surveying itself in an illuminated mirror, carolled over the bright water of Keswick, when two strangers met upon the side of the lofty Skiddaw. Each carried a small bag and a hammer, betokening that their common errand was to search for objects of geological interest. The one appeared about fifty, the other some twenty years younger. There is something in the solitude of the everlasting hills, which makes men, who are strangers to each other, despise the ceremonious introductions of the drawing-room. So was it with our geologists—their place of meeting, their common pursuit, produced an instantaneous familiarity. They spent the day, and dined on the mountain-side together. They shared the contents of their flasks with each other; and, ere they began to descend the hill, they felt. the one towards the other, as though they had been old friends. They had begun to take the road towards Keswick, when the elder said to the younger—"My meeting with you to-day recalls to my recollection a singular meeting which took place between a friend of mine and a stranger, about seven years ago, upon the same mountain. But, sir, I will relate to you the circumstances connected with it; and they might be called the history of the Prodigal Son.'

He paused for a few moments, and proceeded:—"About thirty years ago, a Mr Fenwick was possessed of property in Bamboroughshire worth about three hundred per annum. H had married while young, and seven fair children cheered the hearth of a glad father and a happy mother. Many years of joy and of peace had flown over them, when Death visited their domestic circle, and passed his icy hand over the cheek of their first-born; and, for five successive years, as their children opened into manhood and womanhood, the unwelcome visiter entered their dwelling, till of their little flock there was but one, the youngest, left. And, O sir, in the leaving of that one, lay the cruelty of Death—to have taken him, too, would have been an act of mercy. His name was Edward, and the love, the fondness, and the care which his parents had borne for all their children, were concentrated on him. His father, whose soul was stricken with affliction, yielded to his every wish; and his poor mother

would not permit
The winds of heaven to visit his cheek too roughly.'

But you shall hear how cruelly he repaid their love—how murderously he returned their kindness. He was headstrong and wayward; and, though the small, still voice of affection was never wholly silent in his breast, it was stifled by the storm of his passions and propensities. His first manifestation of open viciousness, was a delight in the brutal practice of cock-fighting; and he became a constant attender at every '*main*' that took place in Northumberland. He was a habitual '*bettor*,' and his losses were frequent; but hitherto his father, partly through fear, and partly from a too tender affection, had supplied him with money. A 'main' was to take place in the neighbourhood of Morpeth, and he was present. Two noble birds were disfigured, the savage instruments of death were fixed upon them, and they were pitted against each other. 'A hundred to one on the Felton Grey!' shouted Fenwick. 'Done! for guineas!' replied another. 'Done! for guineas!—Done!' repeated the prodigal—and the next moment the Felton Grey lay dead on the ground, pierced through the skull with the spur of the other. He rushed out of the cockpit—'I shall expect payment to-morrow, Fenwick,' cried the other. The prodigal mounted his horse, and rode homeward with the fury of a madman. Kind as his father was, and had been, he feared to meet him or tell him the amount of his loss. His mother perceived his agony, and strove to soothe him.

'What is't that troubles thee, my bird?' inquired she; 'come, tell thy mother, darling?'

With an oath he cursed the mention of birds, and threatened to destroy himself.

'O Edward, love!' cried she, 'thou wilt kill thy poor mother—what can I do for thee?'

"Do for me!' he exclaimed, wildly, tearing his hair as he spoke—'do for me, mother!—get me a hundred pounds, or my heart's blood shall flow at your feet.'

'Child! child!' said she, 'thou hast been at thy black trade of betting again!—thou wilt ruin thy father, Edward, and break thy mother's heart. But give me thy hand on't, dear, that thou'lt bet no more, and I'll get thy father to give thee the money.'

'My father must not know,' he exclaimed; 'I will die rather.'

'Love! love!' replied she; 'but, without asking thy father, where could I get thee a hundred pounds?'

'You have some money, mother,' added he; 'and you have trinkets—jewellery!' He gasped, and hid his face as he spoke.

'Thou shalt have them!—thou shalt have them, child!' said she, 'and all the money thy mother has—only say thou wilt bet no more. Dost thou promise, Edward—oh, dost thou promise thy poor mother this?'

'Yes, yes!' he cried. And he burst into tears as he spoke.

He received the money, and the trinkets. which his mother had not worn for thirty years, and hurried from the house, and with them discharged a portion of his dishonourable debt.

He however. did bet again; and I might tell you how he became a horse-racer also; but you shall hear that too. He was now about two and twenty, and for several years he had

been acquainted with Eleanor Robinson—a fair being, made up of gentleness and love, if ever woman was. She was an orphan, and had a fortune at her own disposal of three thousand pounds. Her friends had often warned her against the dangerous habits of Edward Fenwick. But she had given him her young heart—to him she had plighted her first vow—and, though she beheld his follies, she trusted that time and affection would wean him from them; and, with a heart full of hope and love, she bestowed on him her hand and fortune. Poor Eleanor! her hopes were vain, her love unworthily bestowed. Marriage produced no change on the habits of the prodigal son and thoughtless husband. For weeks he was absent from his own house, betting and carousing with his companions of the turf; while one vice led the way to another, and, by almost imperceptible degrees, he unconsciously sunk into all the habits of a profligate.

It was about four years after his marriage, when, according to his custom, he took leave of his wife for a few days, to attend the meeting at Doncaster.

'Good-by, Eleanor, dear,' said he, gaily, as he rose to depart, and kissed her cheek; 'I shall be back within five days.'

'Well, Edward, said she, tenderly, 'if you will go, you must—but think of me, and think of these our little ones.' And, with a tear in her eye, she desired a lovely boy and girl to kiss their father. 'Now, think of us, Edward,' she added; 'and do not bet, dearest—do not bet!'

'Nonsense, duck! nonsense!' said he; 'did you ever see me lose?—do you suppose that Ned Fenwick is not 'wide awake?' I know my horse, and its rider too—Barrymore's Highlander can distance everything. But, if it could not, I have it from a sure hand—the other horses are all '*safe*.' Do you understand that—eh?'

'No, I do not understand it, Edward, nor do I wish to understand it,' added she; 'but, dearest, as you love me—as you love our children—risk nothing.'

'Love you, little gipsy! you know I'd die for you,' said he—and, with all his sins, the prodigal spoke the truth. 'Come, Nell, kiss me again, my dear—no long faces—don't take a leaf out of my old mother's book; you know the saying—'Never venture never win—faint heart never won fair ladye!' Good-by, love—'by Ned—good-by mother's darling,' said he, addressing the children as he left the house.

He reached Doncaster; he had paid his guinea for admission to the betting-rooms; he had whispered with, and slipped a fee to all the shrivelled, skin-and-bone, half melted little manikins, called jockeys, to ascertain the secrets of their horses. 'All's safe!' said the prodigal to himself, rejoicing in his heart. The great day of the festival—the important St Leger—arrived. Hundreds were ready to back Highlander against the field—amongst them was Edward Fenwick; he would take any odds—he did take them—he staked his all. 'A thousand to five hundred on Highlander against the field,' he cried, as he stood near a betting-post. 'Done!' shouted a mustachioed peer of the realm, in a barouche by his side. 'Done!' cried Fenwick, 'for the double, if you like, my lord.' 'Done!' added the peer; 'and I'll treble it if you dare!' 'Done!' rejoined the prodigal, in the confidence and excitement of the moment—'Done! my lord.' The eventful hour arrived. There was not a false start. The horses took the ground beautifully. Highlander led the way at his ease; and his rider, in a tartan jacket and mazarine cap, looked confident. Fenwick stood near the winning-post, grasping the rails with his hands; he was still confident, but he could not chase the admonition of his wife from his mind. The horses were not to be seen. His very soul became like a solid and sharp-edged substance within his breast. Of the twenty horses that started, four again appeared in sight. 'The tartan yet! the tartan yet!' shouted the crowd. Fenwick raised his eyes—he was blind with anxiety—he could not discern them; still he heard the cry of 'The tartan! the tartan!' and his heart sprang to his mouth. 'Well done, orange!—the orange will have it!' was the next cry. He again looked up, but he was more blind than before. 'Beautiful!—beautiful! Go it, tartan! Well done, orange!' shouted the spectators; 'a noble race!—neck and neck; six to five on the orange!' He became almost deaf as well as blind. 'Now for it!—now for it!—it won't do, tartan!—hurra! hurra!—orange has it!'

'Liar!' exclaimed Fenwick, starting as if from a trance, and grasping the spectator who stood next him by the throat—'I am not ruined!'—In a moment he dropped his hands by his side, he leaned over the railing, and gazed vacantly on the ground. His flesh writhed, and his soul groaned in agony. 'Eleanor!—my poor Eleanor!' cried the prodigal. The crowd hurried towards the winning-post—he was lef alone. The peer with whom he had betted, came behind him; he touched him on the shoulder with his whip—'Well, my covey!' said the nobleman, 'you have lost it.'

Fenwick gazed on him with a look of fury and despair and repeated—'Lost it!—I am ruined—soul and body!—wife and children ruined!'

'Well, Mr Fenwick,' said the sporting peer, 'I suppose, if that be the case, you won't come to Doncaster again in a hurry. But my settling day is to-morrow—you know I keep sharp accounts, and if you have not the '*ready*' at hand, I shall expect an equivalent—you understand me.'

So saying, he rode off, leaving the prodigal to commit suicide if he chose. It is enough for me to tell you that, in his madness and his misery, and from the influence of what he called his sense of honour, he gave the winner a bill for the money—payable at sight. My feelings will not permit me to tell you how the poor infatuated madman more than once made attempts upon his own life; but the latent love of his wife and of his children prevailed over the rash thought, and, in a state bordering on insanity, he presented himself before the beings he had so deeply injured.

I might describe to you how poor Eleanor was sitting in their little parlour, with her boy upon a stool by her side, and her little girl on her knee, telling them fondly that their father would be home soon, and anon singing to them the simple nursery rhyme—

'Hush, my babe, baby bunting,
Your father's at the hunting,' &c.

when the door opened, and the guilty father entered—his hair clotted—his eyes rolling with the wildness of despair, and the cold sweat raining down his pale cheeks.

'Eleanor! Eleanor!' he cried, as he flung himself upon a sofa.

She placed her little daughter on the floor—she flew towards him—'My Edward!—oh, my Edward!' she cried—'what is it, love?—something troubles you!'

'Curse me, Eleanor!' exclaimed the wretched prodigal, turning his face from her; 'I have ruined you!—I have ruined my children!—I am lost for ever!'

'No, my husband!' exclaimed the best of wives, 'your Eleanor will not curse you. Tell me the worst, and I will bear it—cheerfully bear it, for my Edward's sake.'

'You will not—you cannot,' cried he; 'I have sinned against you as never man sinned against woman. Oh! if you would spit upon the very ground where I tread, I would feel it as an alleviation of my sufferings—but your sympathy your affection, makes my very soul destroy itself!—Eleanor!—Eleanor!—if you have mercy, hate me—tell me—shew me that you do!'

'O Edward! said she, imploringly, 'was it thus when your Eleanor spurned every offer for your sake, when you pledged to her everlasting love? She has none but you, and can you speak thus? O husband! if you will forsake *me*,

forsake not my poor children. Tell me! only tell me the worst—and I will rejoice to endure it with my Edward!'

'Then,' cried Fenwick, 'if you will add to my misery by professing to love a wretch like me—know you are a beggar!—and I have made you one!—Now, can you share beggary with me?'

She repeated the word 'Beggary!'—she clasped her hands together—for a few moments she stood in silent anguish—her bosom heaved—the tears gushed forth—she flung her arms around her husband's neck—'Yes!' she cried, 'I can meet even beggary with my Edward!'

'O Heaven!' cried the prodigal, 'would that the earth would swallow me!—I cannot stand this!'

I will not dwell upon the endeavours of the fond, forgiving wife, to soothe and to comfort her unworthy husband; nor yet will I describe to you the anguish of the prodigal's father and of his mother, when they heard the extent of his folly and of his guilt. Already he had cost the old man much, and, with a heavy and sorrowful heart, he proceeded to his son's house, to comfort his daughter-in-law. When he entered, she was endeavouring to cheer her husband with a tune upon the harpsichord—though, Heaven knows, there was no music in her breast, save that of love—enduring love!

'Well, Edward,' said the old man, as he took a seat, 'what is this that thou hast done now?'

The prodigal was silent.

'Edward,' continued the grey-haired parent, 'I have had deaths in my family—many deaths, and thou knowest it—but I never had to blush for a child but thee! I have felt sorrow, but thou hast added shame to sorrow'——

'O father!' cried Eleanor, imploringly, 'do not upbraid my poor husband.'

The old man wept—he pressed her hand, and, with a groan, said—'I am ashamed that thou shouldst call me father, sweetest; but, if thou canst forgive him, I should. He is all that is left me—all that the hand of death has spared me in this world! Yet, Eleanor, his conduct is a living death to me—it is worse than all that I have suffered. When affliction pressed heavily upon me, and, year after year, I followed my dear children to the grave, my neighbours sympathised with me—they mingled their tears with mine; but now, child—oh, now, I am ashamed to hold up my head amongst them! O Edward, man! if thou hast no regard for thy father or thy heart-broken mother, hast thou no affection for thy poor wife?—canst thou bring her and thy helpless children to ruin?—But that, I may say, thou hast done already! Son! son! if thou wilt murder thy parents, hast thou no mercy for thine own flesh and blood?—wilt thou destroy thine own offspring? O Edward! if there be any sin that I will repent upon my deathbed, it will be that I have been a too-indulgent father to thee—that I am the author of thy crimes!'

'No, father! no!' cried the prodigal; 'my sins are my own! I am their author, and my soul carries its own punishment! Spurn me! cast me off!—disown me for ever!—it is all I ask of you! You despise me—hate me too, and I will be less miserable!'

'O Edward!' said the old man, 'thou art a father, but little dost thou know a father's heart! Disown thee! Cast thee off, sayest thou! As soon could the graves of thy brothers give up their dead! Never, Edward! never! O son, wouldst thou but reform thy ways—wouldst thou but become a husband worthy of our dear Eleanor; and, after all the suffering thou hast brought upon her, and the shame thou hast brought upon thy family, I would part with my last shilling for thee, Edward, though I should go into the workhouse myself.'

You are affected, sir—I will not harrow up your feelings by further describing the interview between the father and his son. The misery of the prodigal was remorse not penitence. It is sufficient for me to say, that the old man took a heavy mortgage on his property, and Edward Fenwick commenced business as a wine and spirit merchant in Newcastle. But, sir, he did not attend upon business; and I need not tell you that such being the case, business was too proud a customer to attend upon him. Neither did he forsake his old habits, and, within two years, he became involved—deeply involved. Already, to sustain his tottering credit, his father had been brought to the verge of ruin. During his residence in Bamboroughshire, he had become acquainted with many individuals carrying on a contraband trade with Holland. To amend his desperate fortunes, he recklessly embarked in it. In order to obtain a part in the ownership of a lugger, he *used his father's name!* This was the crowning evil in the prodigal's drama. He made the voyage himself. They were pursued and overtaken when attempting to effect a landing near the Coquet. He escaped. But the papers of the vessel bespoke her as being chiefly the property of his father. Need I tell you that this was a finishing blow to the old man?

Edward Fenwick had ruined his wife and family—he had brought ruin upon his father, and was himself a fugitive. He was pursued by the law—he fled from them; and he would have fled from their remembrance, if he could. It was now, sir, that the wrath of Heaven was showered upon the head, and began to touch the heart of the prodigal. Like Cain, he was a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth. For many months he wandered in a distant part of the country; his body was emaciated and clothed with rags, and hunger preyed upon his very heart-strings. It is a vulgar thing, sir, to talk of hunger—but they who have never felt it, know not what it means. He was fainting by the wayside, his teeth were grating together, the tears were rolling down his cheeks. 'The servants of my father's house, he cried, 'have bread enough, and to spare, while I perish with hunger;' and, continuing the language of the prodigal in the Scriptures, he said—'I will arise and go unto my father, and say, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight.'

With a slow and tottering step, he arose to proceed on his journey to his father's house. A month had passed—for every day he made less progress—ere the home of his infancy appeared in sight. It was noon, and, when he saw it, he sat down in a little wood by a hill-side, and wept, until it had become dusk; for he was ashamed of his rags. He drew near the house, but none came forth to welcome him. With a timid hand he rapped at the door, but none answered him. A stranger came from one of the out-houses and inquired—'What dost thou want, man?'

'Mr Fenwick,' feebly answered the prodigal.

'Why, naebody lives there,' said the other, 'and auld Fenwick died in Morpeth jail, mair than three months sin'!'

'Died in Morpeth jail!' groaned the miserable being, and fell against the door of the house that had been his father's.

'I tell ye, ye cannot get in there,' continued the other.

'Sir,' replied Edward, 'pity me—and, oh, tell me, is not Mrs Fenwick here—or her daughter-in-law?'

'I knaw noughts about them,' said the stranger; 'I'm put in charge here by the trustees.'

Want and misery kindled all their fires in the breast of the fugitive. He groaned, and, partly from exhaustion partly from agony, sank upon the ground. The other lifted him to a shed, where cattle were wont to be fed. His lips were perched, his languid eyes rolled vacantly. 'Water! give me water!' he muttered, in a feeble voice; and a cup of water was brought to him. He gazed wistfully in the face of the person who stood over him—he would have asked for bread; but, in the midst of his sufferings, pride was yet strong in his heart, and he could not. The stranger, however, was not wholly destitute of humanity.

'Poor wretch!' said he, 'ye look very fatigued; dow ye think ye cud eat a bit bread, if I were gie'n it to thee?'

Tears gathered in the lustreless eyes of the prodigal; but he could not speak. The stranger left him, and, returning, placed a piece of coarse bread in his hand. He ate a morsel; but his very soul was sick, and his heart loathed to receive the food for lack of which he was perishing.

Vain, sir, were the inquiries after his wife, his children, and his mother; all that he could learn was, that they had kept their sorrow and their shame to themselves, and had left Northumberland together, but where, none knew. He also learned that it was understood amongst his acquaintances that he had put a period to his existence, and that this belief was entertained by his family. Months of wretchedness followed, and Fenwick, in despair, enlisted into a foot regiment, which, within twelve months, was ordered to embark for Egypt. At that period, the British were anxious to hide the remembrance of their unsuccessful attack upon Cadiz, and resolved to wrench the ancient kingdom of the Pharoahs from the grasp of the proud armies of Napoleon. The cabinet, therefore, on the surrender of Malta, having seconded the views of Sir Ralph Abercrombie, several transports were fitted out to join the squadron under Lord Keith. In one of those transports, the penitent prodigal embarked. You are too young to remember it, sir; but at that period a love of country was more widely than ever becoming the ruling passion of every man in Britain; and, with all his sins, his follies, and his miseries, such a feeling glowed in the breast of Edward Fenwick. He was weary of existence, and he longed to listen to the neighing of the war-horse, and the shout of its rider, and as they might rush on the invulnerable phalanx, and its breast-work of bayonets, to mingle in the ranks of heroes; and, rather than pine in inglorious grief, to sell his life for the welfare of his country; or, like the gallant Graham, amidst the din of war, and the confusion of glory, to forget his sorrows. The regiment to which he belonged, joined the main army off the Bay of Marmorice, and was the first that, with the gallant Moore at its head, on the memorable seventh of March, raised the shout of victory on the shores of Aboukir.

In the moment of victory, Fenwick fell wounded on the field, and his comrades, in their triumph, passed over him. He had some skill in surgery, and he was enabled to bind up his wound. He was fainting upon the burning sand, and he was creeping amongst the bodies of the slain, for a drop of moisture to cool his parched tongue, when he perceived a small bottle in the hands of a dead officer. It was half filled with wine—he eagerly raised it to his lips—'Englishman!' cried a feeble voice, 'for the love of Heaven! give me one drop—only one!—or I die!' He looked around—a French officer, apparently in the agonies of death, was vainly endeavouring to raise himself on his side, and stretching his hand towards him. 'Why should I live!' cried the wretched prodigal; 'take it, take it, and live, if you desire life!' He raised the wounded Frenchman's head from the sand—he placed the bottle to his lips—he untied his sash, and bound up his wounds. The other pressed his hand in gratitude. They were conveyed from the field together. Fenwick was unable to follow the army, and he was disabled from continuing in the service. The French officer recovered, and he was grateful for the poor service that had been rendered to him; and, previous to his being sent off with other prisoners, he gave a present of a thousand francs to the joyless being whom he called his deliverer.

I have told you that Fenwick had some skill in surgery—he had studied some years for the medical profession, but abandoned it for the turf and its vices. He proceeded to Alexandria, where he began to practise as a surgeon, and, amongst an ignorant people, gained reputation. Many years passed, and he had acquired, if not riches, at least an independency. Repentance also had penetrated his soul. He had inquired long and anxiously after his family. He had but few other relatives; and to all of them he had anxiously written, imploring them to acquaint him with the residence of the beings whom he had brought to ruin, but whom he still loved. Some returned no answer to his applications, and others only said that they knew nothing of his wife, of his mother, or of his children, nor whether they yet lived; all they knew was, that they had endeavoured to hide the shame he had brought upon them from the world. These words were daggers to his bruised spirit; but he knew he deserved them, and he prayed that Heaven would grant him the consolation and the mercy that was denied him on earth.

Somewhat more than seven years ago, he returned to his native country; and he was wandering on the very mountain where, to-day, I met you, when he entered into conversation with a youth apparently about three or four and twenty years of age; and they spent the day together as we have done. Fenwick was lodging in Keswick, and as, towards evening, they proceeded along the road together, they were overtaken by a storm. 'You must accompany me home,' said the young man, 'until the storm be passed—my mother's house is at hand.'—And he conducted him to yonder lonely cottage, whose white walls you perceive peering through the trees by the water-side. It was dusk when the youth ushered him into a little parlour where two ladies sat; the one appeared about forty, the other threescore and ten. They welcomed the stranger graciously. He ascertained that they let out the rooms of their cottage to visiters to the lakes, during the summer season. He expressed a wish to become their lodger, and made some observations on the beauty of the situation.

'Yes, sir,' said the younger lady, 'the situation is, indeed, beautiful; but I have seen it when the water, and the mountains around it, could impart no charm to its dwellers. Providence has, indeed, been kind to us; and our lodgings have seldom been empty; but, sir, when we entered it, it was a sad house indeed. My poor mother-in-law and myself had experienced many sorrows; yet my poor fatherless children—for I might call them fatherless'—and she wept as she spoke—'with their innocent prattle, soothed our affliction. But my little Eleanor, who was loved by every one, began to droop day by day. It was a winter night—the snow was on the ground—I heard my little darling give a deep sigh upon my bosom. I started up. I called to my poor mother. She brought a light to the bedside—and I found my sweet child dead upon my breast. It was a long and sad night, as we sat by the dead body of my Eleanor, with no one near us; and, after she was buried, my poor Edward there, as he sat by our side at night, would draw forward to his knee the stool on which his sister sat—while his grandmother would glance at him fondly, and push aside the stool with her foot, that I might not see it;—but I saw it all.'

The twilight had deepened in the little parlour, and its inmates could not perfectly distinguish the features of each other; but, as the lady spoke, the soul of Edward Fenwick glowed within him—his heart throbbed—his breathing became thick—the sweat burst upon his brow. 'Pardon me, lady!' he cried, in agony; 'but, oh! tell me your name!'

'Fenwick, sir,' replied she.

'Eleanor! my injured Eleanor!' he exclaimed, flinging himself at her feet; 'I am Edward, your guilty husband!—Mother! can you forgive me? My son! my son! intercede for your guilty father!'

Ah, sir, there needed no intercession—their arms were around his neck—the prodigal was forgiven! Behold," continued the narrator, "yonder, from the cottage, comes the mother, the wife, and the son of whom I have spoken! I will introduce you to them—you shall witness the happiness and penitence of the prodigal—you must stop with me to-night—start not, sir—I am Edward Fenwick the Prodigal Son!"

SIR PATRICK HUME,

A TALE OF THE HOUSE OF MARCHMONT.

Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth was elected representative of the county of Berwick in the year 1665, being then in the twenty-fifth year of his age. He was a lover of freedom, a lover of his country, and a stanch Presbyterian. In those days, however, a love of freedom was a dangerous principle either to avow or to carry into Parliament. The tyrant Charles, whom some falsely call the Merry Monarch, was then attempting to rule the empire with a rod of iron. You have all heard of his Long Parliament, and of his afterwards governing the country, like an absolute tyrant, without a Parliament at all. Fettered and servile as Parliaments then were, young Hume had boldly stood forward as the advocate of civil and religious liberty; and, when the arbitrary monarch sent down a mandate to Scotland for a levy of men and of money, that he might carry his plans of despotism the more effectually into execution, Sir Patrick resisted the slavishness with which it was about to be obeyed.

"What!" exclaimed he, "are we mere instruments in the hands of the King—creatures appointed to minister to his pleasure? Are we not representatives of the people of Scotland—the representatives of their wants and their wishes, and the defenders of their rights—and shall we, as such, at the mere nod of a monarch, drag them from following their plough in the valley, or attending their hirsels on the hill—shall we do these things, and lay contributions on their cattle, on their corn, and on their coffers, merely because his Majesty wills it? Pause, my countrymen. The King has no authority to compel such a measure, and it can only be rendered legal by the concurrence of the assembled representatives of the people."

"Treason!" vociferated the Duke of Lauderdale, who was the arch-minion of Charles—'before the Parliament of Scotland, I denounce Sir Patrick Hume as a dangerous man—as a plotter against the life and dignity of our sovereign lord the King!"

"What," exclaimed Sir Patrick, indignantly fixing his eyes upon Lauderdale, "though there may be amongst us a slave who would sell his country for a royal smile, I still hope that this is a FREE Parliament, and it concerns all the members to be FREE in what concerns the nation."

From that day, Sir Patrick Hume became a suspected man, and the eyes of the King's creatures were upon him; and when, two years afterwards, Charles endeavoured to put down the people by the sword, and establish garrisons throughout the country, again the laird of Polwarth stood foremost in the ranks of opposition, and resisted his power. The King accordingly ordered his privy council to crush so dangerous a spirit, and Sir Patrick was confined in Stirling Castle, where, with the exception of a short interval, he was imprisoned for two years.

Britain had long been distracted with the pretended discovery of fabulous or ridiculous plots against the royal family; and the perjury of paid miscreants, like the infamous Titus Oates, was causing the scaffolds to run with blood. But tyranny being glutted with Catholic blood, and the extinguishing of what were called Popish plots, the myrmidons of Charles (who lived a libertine, and died a Papist) professed that they had discovered a Protestant plot against his royal person. In this plot, the incorruptible Algernon Sydney, Lord Russell, Mr Baillie of Jerviswoode, and Sir Patrick Hume, were included. They beheld their common country withering and wasting beneath the grasp of a tyrant; and true it is they had united together to restore it to freedom, but they were innocent of designs against his life, or even of a wish to dethrone him. They did not, however, act sufficiently in concert, and were unable to bring their plans into operation. A price was set upon their heads—some fled into exile, and others sought refuge on the mountain and in the wilderness, while the amiable Russell died upon the scaffold.

It was near nightfall, in the month of September 1684, when Jamie Winter, who was joiner on the estate of Polwarth, ran breathless up to Redbraes Castle, and knocked loudly at the door. It was opened by John Allan, the land-steward, who, perceiving his agitation, inquired—

"In the name o' gudeness, Jamie, what's happened, what do ye want?"

"Dinna ask, Maister Allan," replied Jamie, "but, for Heaven's sake, tell me—is Sir Patrick at hame?—and let me speak to him presently, as ye value his life."

"Follow me then, Jamie," said the other, "and come in quietly, that the servants mayna observe onything extraordinar'—for we live in times when a man canna trust his ain brither."

The honest joiner was ushered into a room where Sir Patrick sat in the midst of his family, acting at once as their schoolmaster and their playmate.

"Weel, James," said the laird, "I understand ye hae been at Berwick the day—ye've got early back—what uncos heard ye there?"

"I watna, Sir Patrick," replied the other; "now-a-days, I think there's naething unco that can happen. Satan seems to have been let loose on our poor misgoverned country. But I wish to speak to your honour very particularly, and in private, if you please."

"You may speak on, James," said the laird—"I am private in the midst o' my ain family."

"Wi' your guid leave, sir," returned the cautious servant, "I wad rather the bairns were oot o' the way, for what I hae to say is no proper for them to hear, and the sooner ye are acquainted wi' it the better."

Sir Patrick led his younger children out of the room, but requested Lady Polwarth and their eldest daughter, Grizel, a lovely dark-haired girl, about twelve years of age, to remain.

"You are the bearer of evil tidings, James," said he, as he returned, "but you may tell them now—it is meet that my wife should hear them, if they concern me; and," added he, taking Grizel's hand in his, "I keep no secrets from my little secretary."

"God bless her!" said James, "she's an auld-farrant bairn, as wise as she's bonny, I ken that. But, your honour, I am, indeed, the bearer of evil tidings. A party o' troopers arrived at Berwick this morning, and it was nae secret there that they would be baith at Jerviswoode and Redbraes before midnight. I heard them talk o' the premium that was set upon your life, and slipped out o' the town immediately, without performing a single transaction, or speaking a word to a living creature. How I've got along the road is mair than I can tell, for I was literally sick, blind, and desperate wi' grief. I've this minute arrived, and whatever can be done to save you, maun be done instantly."

Lady Polwarth burst into tears. Sir Patrick grasped the hand of his faithful servant. Little Grizel gazed in he father's face with a look of silent despair, but neither spoke nor wept.

"Oh, fly! fly instantly, my dear husband!" cried Lady Polwarth, "and Heaven direct you."

"Be composed, my love," said Sir Patrick; "I fear that flight is impossible; but some means of evading them may perhaps be devised."

"O my leddy," said Jamie Winter, "to flee is out o' the question a'thegither. Government has its spies at every turn o' the road—in every house in the country—even in this house. Our only hope is to conceal Sir Patrick; but how or where is beyond my comprehension."

Many were the schemes devised by the anxious wife—many the suggestions of her husband and honest Jamie pro-

posed numerous plans—but each was, in its turn, rejected as being unsafe. More than an hour had passed in these anxious deliberations; within three hours more, and the King's troops would be at his gate. Grizel had, till now, remained silent, and dashing away the first tear that rolled down her cheek, she flung her arms around her father's neck, and exclaimed, in an eager and breathless whisper—

"I ken a place, faither—I ken a place that the King's troopers and his spies will never find out; and I'll stop beside ye, to bear ye company."

"Bless my bairn!" said Sir Patrick, pressing her to his breast; "and where's the place, dearest?"

The aisle below Polwarth kirk, faither," returned Grizel—"nae trooper will find out such a hidingplace; for the mouth's a bit wee hole, and the long grass, and the docks, and the nettles grow over it, and I could slip out and in without trampling them down; and naebody would think o' seeking'y there, faither."

Lady Polwarth shuddered, and Sir Patrick pressed the cheek of his lovely daughter to his lips.

"Save us a', bairn!" said Jamie, "there's surely something no earthly about yer young leddyship, for ye hae mair sense than us a' put thegither. The aisle is the very place. I'll steal awa, an' hae a kind o' bed put up in it, an' tak other twa or thre bits o' necessary things; and, Sir Patrick, ye'll slip out o' the house an' meet me there as soon as possible." Within an hour, Sir Patrick had joined Jamie Winter in the dark and dismal aisle. The humble bed was soon and silently fitted up, and the faithful servant, wishing his master 'farewell," left him alone in his dreary prison-house. Slow and heavily the hours of darkness moved on. He heard the trampling of the troopers' horses galloping in quest of him. The oaths and the imprecations of the riders fell distinctly on his ears. Amidst such sounds he heard them mention his name. But his heart failed not. He knelt down upon the cold damp floor of his hidingplace—upon the bones of his fathers—and there, in soundless, but earnest prayer, supplicated his father's God to protect his family—to save his country—to forgive his persecutors, and to do with him as seemed good in His sight. He arose; and, laying himself upon his cold and comfortless bed, slept calmly. He awoke shivering and benumbed. Faint streaks of light stole into the place of death through its narrow aperture, dimly revealing the ghastly sights of the charnel-house, and the slow reptiles that crawled along the floor. Again night came on, and the shadows of light, if I may use the expression, which revealed his cell, died away. A second morning had come, and a second time the feeble rays had been lost in utter darkness. It was near midnight, and the slender stock of provisions which he had brought with him were nigh exhausted. He started from his lowly couch—he heard a rustling among the weeds at the mouth of the aisle—he heard some one endeavouring to remove the fragment of an old gravestone that covered it.

"Faither!" whispered an eager voice—"faither—it is me—yer ain Grizel!"

"My own, devoted, my matchless child!" said Sir Patrick, stretching his hands towards the aperture, and receiving her in his arms.

She sat down beside him on the bed—she detailed the search of the troopers—she stated that they were watched in their own house—that a spy was set over the very victuals that came from their table, lest he should be concealed near, and fed by his family.

"But what of that?" continued the light-hearted and heroic girl; "while my plate is supplied, my faither's shall not be empty; and here," added she, laughing, "here is a flask of wine, cakes, and a sheep's head. But I will tell you a story about the sheep's head. It was placed on a plate before me at dinner-time. The servant was out o' the room, naebody was looking, and I whupped it into my apron. Little Sandy wanted a piece, and, turning round for it, and missing the head—'Ah! mother!' he cried, 'our Grizzy has swallowed a sheep's head, bones an a, in a moment!' 'Wheesht, laddie!' said my mother; 'eat ye next ane then.' 'Oh, ye greedy Grizzy!' said Sandy, shaking his little nieve in my face; 'I'll mind you for this.' 'I'm sure Sandy will ne'er forget me,' said I, and slipped away out to hide the sheep's head in my own room; and as soon as I thought naebody was astir, I creeped out quietly by the window and got down here behint the hedges—and I'll come every night, faither. But last night the troopers were still about the house."

In spite of his misery, Sir Patrick laughed at the ingenuity of his beloved and heroic daughter; then wept and laughed again, and pressed her to his bosom.

He had passed many weeks in this cheerless dungeon, with no companion during the day save a volume of Buchanan's Psalms, but every night he was visited by his intrepid daughter, who at once supplied him with food, and beguiled the hours of his solitude. He was sitting in the gloomy cell, conning over his favourite volume—the stone at the aperture had been pushed aside a few inches to admit the light more freely, and the weeds at the entrance were now bowed down and withered by the frost—a few boys were playing in the churchyard, and tossing a ball against the kirk. Being driven from the hand of an unskilful player, it suddenly bounded into the aisle. Sir Patrick started, and the book dropped from his hand. Immediately the aperture was surrounded by the boys, and the stone removed. They stood debating who should enter, but none had sufficient courage. At length, one more hardy than the rest volunteered to enter, if another would follow him. The laird gave himself up as lost, for he knew that even the tale of a schoolboy would effect his ruin. He was aware he could disperse them with a single groan; but even that, when told to his enemies, might betray him. At length three agreed to enter, and the feet of the first already protruded into the aisle. Sir Patrick crept silently to its farthest corner, when the gruff voice of the old grave-digger reached his ears, shouting—

"The mischief's in the callants, an' nae guid; what are ye doing there? Do ye want the ghaists o' the auld Humes aboot yer lugs?"

The boys fled amain, and the old man came growling to the mouth of the aisle.

"The deevil's in the bairns o' Polwarth," said he; "for they would disturb the very dead in their graves. I'll declare they've the stane frae the mouth o' the aisle!"

He stooped down, and Sir Patrick saw his grim visage through the aperture, and heard him thus continue his soliloquy, as he replaced the stone—

"Sorrow tak the hands that moved the stane!—ye're hardly worth the covering up again, for ye're a profitless hole to me; and I fancy him that I should lay in ye next, be he where he likes, will gang the gate that his freend, Bailie, gaed yesterday on a scaffold. A grave-digger's a puir business, I am sorry to say, in our King's reign; an the fient a ane thrives but the common executioner."

So saying, he enveloped Sir Patrick in utter darkness. That night Grizel and her father left the aisle together, and from her he learned the particulars of what he had heard muttered by the grave-digger, that his friend, Mr Bailie of Jerviswoode, had been executed the previous day.

Disguised, and in the character of a surgeon, he, by by-ways, reached London, and from thence fled to France. On the death of Charles, and when the bigot James ascended the throne, Sir Patrick was one of the leaders of the band of patriots who drew their swords in behalf of a Protestant succession.

That enterprise was unsuccessful; and, after contending, almost single-handed, against the enemies of his religion and his country, he and his family sought refuge in a foreign land. He assumed the name of Dr Peter Wallace, and they took up their abode in Utrecht. There, poverty and

privations sought and found the exiles. They had parted with every domestic, and the lovely Grizel was the sole servant and helper of her mother, and, when their work was done, the assistant of her father in the education of the younger children; for he had no longer the means of providing them a tutor. Yet theirs was a family of love—a family of happiness—and poverty purified their affections. But their remittances from Scotland were not only scanty but uncertain. Till now, Sir Patrick had borne his misfortunes with resignation and even cheerfulness; he cared not that he was stripped of attendants, and of every luxury of life; yet, at times, the secret and unbidden tears would start into his eyes, as he beheld his wife and his fair daughter performing, without a murmur, the most menial offices. But the measure of his trials was not yet full—luxuries were not only denied him, but he was without food to set before his children. The father wept, and his spirit heaved with anguish. Grizel beheld his tears, and she knew the cause. She spoke not; but, hastening to her little cabinet, she took from it a pair of jewelled bracelets, and, wrapping herself up in a cloak, she took a basket under her arm, and hurried to the street. The gentle being glided along the streets of Utrecht, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, and shunning the glance of the passengers, as if each knew her errand. She stood before a shop in which all manner of merchandise was exposed, and three golden balls were suspended over the door. She cast a timid gaze into the shop—thrice she passed and repassed it, and repeated the timid glance. She entered—she placed the bracelets upon the counter.

"How much?" was the laconic question of the shopman. Grizel burst into tears. He handed her a sum of money across the counter, and deposited the bracelets in his desk. She bounded from the shop with a heart and a step light as a young bird in its first pride of plumage. She hastened home with her basket filled. She placed it upon the table. Lady Polwarth wept, and fell upon her daughter's neck.

"Where have you been, Grizel?" faltered her father.

"Purchasing provisions for a bauble," said she; and the smile and the tear were seen on her cheek together.

But many were the visits which the gentle Grizel had to pay to the Golden Balls, while one piece of plate was pledged after another, that her father, and her mother, and her brethren, might eat and not die;—and even then, the table of Sir Patrick, humble as it was, and uncertainly provided for, was open to the needy of his countrymen. Thus three years passed—the memorable 1688 arrived. Sir Patrick was the friend, the counsellor, and supporter of King William—he arrived with him in England—he shared in his triumph. He was created Lord Polwarth, and appointed sheriff of Berwickshire; and, in 1696, though not a lawyer, but an upright man, he was made Lord Chancellor of Scotland, and created Earl of Marchmont, and Lord of Polwarth, Redbraes, and Greenlaw. He was one of the most ardent promoters of the Union, and with it ceased his political career. In 1710, when the Tories came into power, the Earl being the stanchest Whig in Scotland, he was deprived of the office of sheriff of Berwickshire, but was reinstated in 1715. His lady being dead, he came to take up his residence in Berwick-upon-Tweed; and there, when the heroic Grizel, who was now a wife and a mother, (being married to the son of his unfortunate friend, Mr Bailie of Jerviswoode,) came with her children and friends to visit him for the last time, as they danced in the hall, though unable to walk, he desired to be carried into the midst of them, and beating time with his foot—"See, Grizel," exclaimed the old patriot, "though your father is unable to dance, he can still beat time with his foot."

Shortly after this, he died in Berwick, on the 1st of August 1724, in the eighty-third year of his age—leaving behind him an example of piety, courage, and patriotism, worthy the imitation of posterity

CHARLES LAWSON;

"Tak a faither's advice, Betty, my woman," said Andrew Weir to his only daughter, "tak a faither's advice, an avoid gaun blindfolded to your ruin. Ye are soon enough to marry these seven years yet. Marry! preserve us! for I dinna ken what the generation is turning to, but I'll declare bits o' lasses now-a-days haena the dolls weel out o' their arms till they tak a guidman by the hand. But aboon everything earthly, I would impress it upon ye, bairn, that ye canna be ower carefu' o your company; mind that a character is a' a woman has to carry her through the world, and ye should guard it like the apple o' your e'e; and remember, that folk are aye judged o' frae the company they keep. Now, how often maun I warn ye no to be seen wi' Charles Lawson—he's a clever lad, nae doubt—naebody denies that; but, O Betty, Betty, woman! would ye only reflect that a' gifts are no graces; and I am far mist 'en if he hasna a serpent's heart as weel as his tongue. He has naething o' the fear o' God before his een—ye canna deny that. In ae word, he is a wild, thoughtless ne'er-do-weel;—an' I charge ye, I command ye, Betty, that ye ne'er speak to him again in your born days; or, if ye do, ye surely will hae but little satisfaction to break your faither's heart, and bring him to the grave wi' sorrow and wi' shame—for that, Betty, that would be the end o't."

Elizabeth heard him, and bent her head upon her bosom to conceal her confusion. The parental homily was too late—she was already the wife of Charles Lawson.

Having thus begun our story in the middle, it is necessary that we go back and inform the reader, in a few words, that Andrew Weir was a respectable farmer on the north side of the Tweed, and, withal, a decent and devout Presbyterian, and an elder in the kirk. Charles Lawson's parents were originally from Northumberland. They had known better days, and, at the period we have alluded to, were struggling with a hard farm in the neighbourhood of Andrew Weir's. Charles was not exactly what his father-in-law had described him; and were we to express his portrait in a line, we should say, he had blue eyes and a broad brow, a goodly form and an open heart. The ringlets which parted on Elizabeth's forehead were like the raven's wing, and loveliness, if not beauty, nestled around the dimples on her cheeks. Their affection for each other began in childhood, and grew with their years, till it became strong as their existence.

A few weeks after Andrew Weir had delivered the advice we have quoted to his daughter, Charles Lawson bade farewell to his parents, his wife, and his country, and proceeded to India, where a relative of his mother's had amassed a fortune, and who, while he refused to assist them in their distress, had promised to make provision for their son. As we are not writing a novel in three volumes, we shall not describe the scene of their parting, and tell with what agony with what tears, and with what bitter words, Charles tore himself from his father, his mother, and his yet unacknowledged wife. The imagination of the reader may supply the blank. Hope urged him to go—necessity compelled him.

After his departure, Elizabeth drooped like an early lily beneath the influence of a returning frost. There were whisperings among the matrons and maidens of the neighbouring village. They who had formerly courted her society began to shun it; and even the rude clown who lately stood abashed in her presence, approached her with indecent familiarity. The fatal whisper first reached Andrew's ear at a meeting of the kirk-session of which he was a member. He returned home troubled in spirit, a miserable and an humbled man, for his daughter had been his pride. Poor Elizabeth confessed that she was married, and attempted to

prove what she affirmed. But this afforded no palliation of her offence in the eyes of her rigid and offended father. "Oh, what hae I been born to suffer!" cried he, stamping his feet upon the ground—"Oh, you witch o' Endor!—you Jezebel!—you disgrace o' kith an' kin! Could naething—naething serve ye but breaking yer puir auld faither's heart? Get out o' my sicht!—get out o' my sicht!" He remained silent for a few moments—the parent arose in his heart—tears gathered in his eyes. "But ye are still my bairn," he continued. "O Betty, Betty, woman! what hae ye brought us to!" Again he was silent, and again proceeded—"But I forgie ye, Betty—yes, if naebody else will, yer faither will forgie ye for yer mother's sake, for ye are a' that I hae left o' her. But we canna haud up our heads again, in this pairt o' the country—that's impossible. I've lang thought o' gaun to America, an' now I'm driven till't."

He parted with his farm, and in the ensuing spring proceeded with his daughter to Canada. We shall not enter upon his fortunes in the new world—he was still broken in spirit—and, after twelve years' residence, he was neither richer nor happier than when he left Scotland. Elizabeth was now a mother, and the smiles of her young son seemed to shorten the years of her exile; yet, ever as she returned his smile, the thought of the husband of her youth flashed back on her remembrance, and anguish and misery shot through her bosom as the eagle darteth on its prey. Her heart was not broken, but it fell like a proud citadel, burying the determined garrison.

Charles Lawson had not been in India many months, when a party of native troops attacking the property of his relative, Charles, who had fallen wounded amongst them, was carried by them in their retreat into the interior of the country, where, for several years, he was cut off from all intercourse or communication with his countrymen. On obtaining his liberty, he found that his kinsman had been for some time dead, and had left him his heir. His wife—his parents—doubt—anxiety—impatient affection—trembling hope, all hastened his return. At length the white cliffs of Albion appeared before him, like a fair cloud spread on the unruffled bosom of the ocean; and, in a few days more, the green hills of his childhood met his anxious eye.

It was the grey hour of a summer night as he again approached the roof that sheltered his childhood. His horse, as if conscious of supporting an almost unconscious rider, stopped involuntarily at the threshold. He trembled upon the saddle as a leaf that rustles in the wind. He raised his hand to knock at the door, but again withdrew it. The inmates of the house, aroused by the sound of a horse stopping at the door, came out to inquire the cause. Charles gazed upon them for a moment—it was a look of agony and disappointment—his heart gave one convulsive throb, and the icy sweat burst from his temples. "Does not—does not Mr Lawson—live here?" he inquired, almost gasping for words to convey the question.

"Mr Lawson! na, na, sir," replied the senior of the group, "it's lang since he gaed awa. Ye ken he gaed a' wrang, puir man, and he's no lived here since the hard winter, for they didna come upon this parish."

"Did not come upon this parish!" exclaimed Charles; "heaven and earth! what do you mean?"

"Mean! what wad I mean," answered the other, "but just that they were removed to their ain parish—is there ony disgrace in that?"

"Oh, my father!—my poor mother!" cried Charles, wildly.

"Mercy, sir!" rejoined the astonished farmer, "are ye Maister Charles?—Bairns! haste ye, tak the horse to the stable.—Losh, Charles, man, an' how hae ye been?—but ye dinna ken me—man, I'm yer auld schoolfellow, Bob Graham, and this is my wife, Mysie Allan—ye mind o' Mysie. Haste ye, Mysie lass, kill twa ducks, an' the bairns an me will hool the pease. Really, Charles, man, I'm sae glad to see ye!"

During this harangue, Charles, led by his warm-hearted friend, had entered the dwelling of his nativity; where Mr Graham again continued—"Ye, aiblins, dinna ken that auld Andrew Weir was sae sair in the dorts when ye gaed awa, that he set off wi' Betty for America. But I hear they are coming hame again this back end. The bairn will be a stout callant now, and faith ye maun marry Betty, for she was a mensefu' lass."

Charles could only reply by exclaiming—"America!—my wife!—my child!"

Having ascertained where he would find his parents, early on the following morning he departed, and, about five in the afternoon, approached the village where he had been told they resided. When near the little burying-ground, he stopped to look upon the most melancholy funeral procession he had ever witnessed. The humble coffin was scarce coloured, and they who bore it seemed tired of their burden. Three or four aged and poor-looking people walked behind it. Scarce was it lowered into the grave, ere all departed, save one, meanly clothed in widow's weeds, and bent rather with the load of grief than of years. She alone lingered weeping over the hastily-covered grave.

"She seems poor," said Charles, "and if I cannot comfort her, I may at least relieve her necessities;"—and fastening his horse to the gate, he entered the churchyard.

She held an old handkerchief before her face, only removing it at intervals to steal a hurried glance at the new-made grave.

"Good woman," said Charles, as he approached her "your sorrows demand my sympathy—could I assist you?"

"No! no!" replied the poor widow, without raising her face—"but I thank you for your kindness. Can the grave give up its dead?"

"But why should you remain here?" said he, with emotion; "tell me, could not I assist you?" And he placed a piece of money in her hand.

"No! no!" cried the widow, bitterly, and raising her head; "oh, that Mary Lawson should have lived to be offered charity on her husband's grave!"

"My mother! gracious Heaven! my mother!" exclaimed Charles, casting his arms around her neck. Shall we describe the scene that followed?—we will not, we cannot. He had seen his father laid in the dust, he had met his mother on his father's grave——but we will not go on.

It was some weeks after this that he proceeded with his widowed mother to his native village, to wait the return of Elizabeth. Nor had he to wait; for, on the day previous to his return, Elizabeth, her son, and her father, had arrived. Charles and his parent had reached Mr Graham's—the honest farmer rushed to the door, and, hurrying both towards the house, exclaimed, "Now, see if ye can find onybody that ye ken here!" His Elizabeth—his wife—his son—were there to meet him; the next moment she was upon his bosom, and her child clinging by her side, and gazing on his face. He alternately held both to his heart—the mother and her son. Andrew Weir took his hand—his mother wept with joy and blessed her children. Bob Graham and his Mysie were as happy as their guests. Charles Lawson bought the farm which Andrew Weir had formerly tenanted; and our informant adds—they live in it still.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE ORPHAN.

About forty years ago, a post-chaise was a sight more novel in the little hamlet of Thorndean, than silk gowns in country churches during the maidenhood of our great-grandmothers; and, as one drew up at the only public-house in the village, the inhabitants, old and young, startled by the unusual and merry sound of its wheels, hurried to the street. The landlady, on the first notice of its approach, had hastily bestowed upon her goodly person the additional recommendation of a clean cap and apron; and, still tying the apron strings, ran bustling to the door, smiling, colouring, and courtesying, and courtesying and colouring again, to the yet unopened chaise. Poor soul! she knew not well how to behave—it was an epoch in her annals of innkeeping. At length the coachman, opening the door, handed out a lady in widow's weeds; a beautiful, golden-haired child, apparently not exceeding five years of age, sprang to the ground without assistance, and grasped her extended hand. "What an image o' beauty!" exclaimed some half-dozen bystanders, as the fair child lifted her lovely face of smiles to the eyes of her mother. The lady stepped feebly towards the inn, and, though the landlady's heart continued to practise a sort of fluttering motion, which communicated a portion of its agitation to her hands, she waited upon her unexpected and unusual guests with a kindliness and humility that fully recompensed for the expertness of a practised waiter. About half an hour after the arrival of her visiters, she was seen bustling from the door—her face, as the villagers said, bursting with importance. They were still in groups about their doors, and in the middle of the little street, discussing the mysterious arrival; and, as she hastened on her mission, she was assailed with a dozen such questions as these—'Wat ye wha she is?" "Is she ony great body?" "Hae ye ony guess what brought her here?" and "Is yon bonny creature her ain bairn?" But to these and sundry other interrogatories, the important hostess gave for answer—"Hoot, I hae nae time to haver the noo." She stopped at a small, but certainly the most genteel house in the village, occupied by a Mrs Douglas, who, in the country phrase, was a very douce, decent sort of an old body, and the widow of a Cameronian minister. In the summer season, Mrs Douglas let out her little parlour to lodgers, who visited the village to seek health, or for a few weeks' retirement. She was compelled to do this from the narrowness of her circumstances; for, though she was a "clever-handed woman," as her neighbours said, "she had a sair fecht to keep up an appearance onyway like the thing ava." In a few minutes Mrs. Douglas, in a clean cap, a muslin kerchief round her neck, a quilted black bombazeen gown, and snow-white apron, followed the landlady up to the inn. In a short time she returned, the stranger lady leaning upon her arm, and the lovely child leaping like a young lamb before them. Days and weeks passed away, and the good people of Thorndean, notwithstanding all their surmises and inquiries, were no wiser regarding their new visiter; all they could learn was, that she was the widow of a young officer, who wa one of the first that fell when Britain interfered with the French Revolution; and the mother and her child became known in the village by the designation of "Mrs Douglas' twa pictures!"—an appellation bestowed on them in reference to their beauty.

The beautiful destroyer, however, lay in the mother's heart, now paling her cheeks like the early lilly, and again scattering over them the rose and the rainbow. Still dreaming of recovery, about eight months after her arrival in Thorndean, death stole over her like a sweet sleep. It was only a few moments before the angel hurled the fatal shaft, that the truth fell upon her soul. She was stretching forth her hand to her work-basket, her lovely child was prattling by her knee, and Mrs Douglas smiling like a parent upon both, striving to conceal a tear while she smiled, when the breathing of her fair guest became difficult, and the rose, which a moment before bloomed upon her countenance, vanished in a fitful streak. She flung her feeble arms around the neck of her child, who now wept upon her bosom, and exclaimed—"Oh! my Elizabeth, who will protect you now—my poor, poor orphan?" Mrs Douglas sprang to her assistance. She said she had much to tell, and endeavoured to speak; but a gurgling sound only was heard in her throat; she panted fo breath; the rosy streaks, deepening into blue, came and went upon her cheeks like the midnight dances of the northern lights; her eyes flashed with a momentary brightness more than mortal, and the spirit fled. The fair orphan still clung to the neck, and kissed the yet warm lips of her dead mother.

As yet she was too young to see all the dreariness of the desolation around her; but she was indeed an orphan in the most cruel meaning of the word. Her mother had preserved a mystery over her sorrows and the circumstances of her life, which Mrs Douglas had never endeavoured to penetrate. And now she was left to be as a mother to the helpless child, for she knew not if she had another friend; and all that she had heard of the mother's history was recorded on the humble stone which she placed over her grave—"*Here resteth the body of Isabella Morton, widow of Captain Morton; she died amongst us a stranger, but beloved.*" The whole property to which the fair orphan became heir by the death of her mother, did not amount to fifty pounds, and amongst the property no document was found which could throw any light upon who were her relatives, or if she had any. But the heart of Mrs Douglas had already adopted her as a daughter; and, circumscribed as her circumstances were, she trusted that He who provided food for the very birds of heaven, would provide the orphan's morsel.

Years rolled on, and Elizabeth Morton grew in stature and in beauty, the pride of her protector, and the joy of her age. But the infirmities of years grew upon her foster-

mother, and, disabling her from following her habits of industry, stern want entered her happy cottage. Still Elizabeth appeared only as a thing of joy, contentment, and gratitude; and often did her evening song beguile her aged friend's sigh into a smile. And to better their hard lot, she hired herself to watch a few sheep upon the neighbouring hills, to the steward of a gentleman named Sommerville, who, about the time of her mother's death, had purchased the estate of Thorndean. He was but little beloved, for he was a hard master, and a bad husband; and more than once he had been seen at the hour of midnight, in the silent churchyard, standing over the grave of Mrs Morton. This gave rise to not a few whisperings respecting the birth of poor Elizabeth. He had no children, and a nephew who resided in his house was understood to be his heir. William Sommerville was about a year older than our fair orphan; and ever as he could escape the eye of his uncle, he would fly to the village to seek out Elizabeth as a playmate. And now, while she tended the few sheep, he would steal round the hills, and placing himself by her side, teach her the lessons he had that day been taught, while his arm in innocence rested on her neck, their glowing cheeks touched each other, and her golden curls played around them. Often were their peaceful lessons broken by the harsh voice and the blows of his uncle. But still William stole to the presence of his playmate and pupil, until he had completed his fourteenth year; when he was to leave Thorndean, preparatory to entering the army. He was permitted to take a hasty farewell of the villagers, for they all loved the boy; but he went only to the cottage of Mrs Douglas. As he entered, Elizabeth wept, and he also burst into tears. Their aged friend beheld the yearnings of a young passion that might terminate in sorrow; and taking his hand, she prayed God to prosper him, and bade him farewell. She was leading him to the door, when Elizabeth raised her tearful eyes; he beheld them, and read their meaning, and, leaping forward, threw his arms round her neck, and printed the first kiss on her forehead! "Do not forget me, Elizabeth" he cried, and hurried from the house.

Seven years from this period passed away. The lovely girl was now transformed into the elegant woman, in the summer majesty of her beauty. For four years Elizabeth had kept a school in the village, to which her gentleness and winning manners drew prosperity; and her grey-haired benefactress enjoyed the reward of her benevolence. Preparations were making at Thorndean Hall for the reception of William, who was now returning as Lieutenant Sommerville. A post-chaise in the village had then become a sight less rare; but several cottagers were assembled before the inn to welcome the young laird. He arrived, and with him a gentleman between forty and fifty years of age. They had merely become acquainted as travelling companions; and the stranger being on his way northward, had accepted his invitation to rest at his uncle's for a few days. The footpath to the Hall lay through the churchyard, about a quarter of a mile from the village. It was a secluded path, and Elizabeth was wont to retire to it between school hours, and frequently to spend a few moments in silent meditation over her mother's grave. She was gazing upon it, when a voice arrested her attention, saying, "Elizabeth—Miss Morton!" The speaker was Lieutenant Sommerville, accompanied by his friend. To the meeting of the young lovers we shall add nothing. But the elder stranger gazed on her face and trembled, and looked on her mother's grave and wept. "Morton!" he repeated, and read the inscription on the humble stone, and again gazed on her face, and again wept. "Lady!" he exclaimed, "pardon a miserable man—what was the name of your mother?—who the family of your father? Answer me, I implore you!" "Alas! I know neither," said the wondering and now unhappy Elizabeth. Your name is Morton," cried the stranger; "I had a wife—I had a daughter once, and my Isabella's face was thy face!" While he yet spoke, the elder Sommerville drew near to meet his nephew. His eyes and the stranger's met. "Sommerville!" exclaimed the stranger, starting. "The same," replied the other, his brow blackening like thunder, while a trembling passed over his body. He rudely grasped the arm of his nephew, and dragged him away. The interesting stranger accompanied Elizabeth to the house of Mrs Douglas. Painful were his inquiries; for, while they kindled hope and assurance, they left all in cruel uncertainty "Oh, sir!" said Mrs Douglas, "if ye be the faither o' my blessed bairn, I dinna wonder at auld Sommerville growing black in the face when he saw ye; for, when want came hard upon our heels, and my dear motherless and faitherless bairn was driven to herd his sheep by the brae-sides—there wad the poor, dear, delicate bairn (for she was as delicate then as she is bonny now) been lying—the sheep a' feeding round about her, and her readin' at her Bible, just like a little angel, her lee lane, when the brute wad come sleekin' down ahint her, an' giein' her a drive wi' his foot, cursed her for a little lazy something I'm no gaun to name, an' rugged her bonny yellow hair, till he had the half o' it torn out o' her head;—or the monster wad riven the blessed book out o' her hand, an' thrown it wi' an oath as far as he could drive. But the nephew was aye a bit fine callant; only, ye ken wi' my bairn's prospects it wasna my part to encourage onything."

Eagerly did the stranger, who gave his name as Colonel Morton, hang over the fair being who had conjured up the sunshine of his youth. One by one, he was weeping and tracing every remembered feature of his wife upon her face; when doubt again entered his mind, and he exclaimed in bitterness—"Merciful Heaven! convince me Oh, convince me that I have found my child!" The few trinkets that belonged to Mrs Morton had been parted with in the depth of her poverty. At that moment, Lieutenant Sommerville hastily entered the cottage. He stated that his uncle had left the Hall, and delivered a letter from him to Colonel Morton. It was of few words, and as follows:—

"Morton,—We were rivals for Isabella's love—you were made happy, and I miserable. But I have not been unrevenged. It was I who betrayed you into the hands of the enemy. It was I who reported you dead—who caused the tidings to be hastened to your widowed wife, and followed them to England. It was I who poisoned the ear of her friends, until they cast her off—I dogged her to her obscurity, that I might enjoy my triumph; but death thwarted me as you had done. Yet I will do one act of mercy—she sleeps beneath the grave where we met yesterday; and the lady before whom you wept—is your own daughter."

He cast down the letter, and exclaimed—"My child!—my long lost child!" And, in speechless joy, the father and the daughter rushed to each other's arms. Shall we add more? The elder Sommerville left his native land, which he never again disgraced with his presence. William and Elizabeth wandered by the hill-side in bliss, catching love and recollections from the scene. In a few months her father bestowed on him her hand, and Mrs Douglas, in joy and in pride, bestowed upon both her blessing.

SQUIRE BEN.

Before introducing my readers to the narrative of Squire Ben, it may be proper to inform them who Squire Ben was. In the year 1816, when the piping times of peace had begun, and our heroes, like Othello, found "their occupation gone," a thickset, bluff, burly-headed little man—whose every word and look reminded you of Incledon's "*Cease*,

rude Boreas," and bespoke him to be one of those who had "sailed with noble Jervis," or,

"In gallant Duncan's fleet,
Had sung out, yo heave ho!"—

purchased a small estate in Northumberland, a few miles from the banks of the Coquet. He might be fifty years of age; but his weather-beaten countenance gave him the appearance of a man of sixty. Around the collar of a Newfoundland dog, which followed him more faithfully than his shadow, were engraved the words, "Captain Benjamin Cookson;" but, after he had purchased the estate to which I have alluded, his poorer neighbours called him Squire Ben. He was a strange mixture of enthusiasm, shrewdness, courage, comicality, generosity, and humanity. Ben, on becoming a country gentleman, became a keen fisher; and, as it is said, "a fellow feeling makes one wondrous kind," I also being fond of the sport, became a mighty favourite with the bluff-faced Squire. It was on a fine bracing day in March, after a tolerable day's fishing, we went to dine and spend the afternoon in the Angler's Inn, which stands at the north end of the bridge over the Coquet, at the foot of the hill leading up to Longframlington. Observing that Ben was in good sailing trim, I dropped a hint that an account of his voyages and cruises on the ocean of life would be interesting.

"Ah, my boy," said Ben, "you are there with your soundings, are you?—Well, you shall have a long story by the shortest tack. Somebody was my father," continued he, 'but whom I know not. This much I know about my mother: she was cook in a gentleman's family in this county; and being a fat, portly body—something of the build of her son, I take it—no one suspected that she was in a certain delicate situation, until within a few days before I was born. Then, with very grief and shame, the poor thing became delirious; and, as an old servant of the family has since told me, you could see the very flesh melting off her bones. While she continued in a state of delirium, your humble servant, poor Benjamin, was born; and, without recovering her senses, she died within an hour after my birth, leaving me—a beautiful orphan, as you see me now—a legacy to the workhouse and the world. Benjamin was my mother's family name—from which I suppose they had something of the Jew in their blood; though, Heaven knows, I have none in my composition. So they who had the christening of me gave me my mother's name of Benjamin, as my Christian name; and, from her occupation as *cook*, they surnamed me Cookson—that is, 'Benjamin the Cook's son,' simply Benjamin Cookson, more simply, Squire Ben. Well, you see, my boy, I was born beneath the roof of an English squire, and, before I was three hours old, was handed over to the workhouse. This was the beginning of my life. The first thing I remember was hating the workhouse—the second was loving the sea. Yes, sir, before I was seven years old, I used to steal away in the noble company of my own good self, and sit down upon a rock on the solitary beach, watching the ships, the waves, and the sea-birds—wishing to be a wave, a ship, or a bird—ay, sir, wishing to be anything but poor orphan Ben. The sea was to me what my parents should have been—a thing I delighted to look upon. I loved the very music of its maddest storms; though, quietly, I have since had enough of them. I began my career before I was ten years of age, as cabin-boy in a collier. My skipper was a dare-devil, tear-away sort of fellow, who cared no more for running down one of your coasting craft, than for turning a quid in his mouth. But he was a good, honest, kind-hearted sort of chap for all that—barring that the rope's-end was too often in his hand. 'Ben,' says he to me one misty day, when we were taking coals across the herring pond to the Dutchmen, and the man at the helm could not see half-way to the mast head—'Ben, my little fellow, can you cipher?' Yes, sir,' says I. 'The deuce you can!' says he; 'then you're just the lad for me. And do you understand logarithms?' 'No, sir,' says I; 'what sort of wood he they?' 'Wood be hanged! you blockhead!' said he, raising his foot in a passion, but a smile on the corners of his mouth shoved it to the deck again, before it reached me. 'But come, Ben, you can cipher, you say; well, I know all about the radius and tangents, and them sort of things, and stating the question; but blow me if I have a multiplication table on board—my fingers are of no use at a long number, and I am always getting out of it counting by chalks;—so come below, Ben, and look over the question, and let us find where we are. I know I have made a mistake someway; and mark ye, Ben, if you don't find it out—ye that can cipher—there's a rope's-end to your supper, and that's all.' Hows'ever, sir, I did find it out, and I was regarded as a prodigy in the ship ever after. The year before I was out of my apprenticeship, our vessel was laid up for four months, and the skipper sent me to school during the time, at his own expense, saying—'Get navigation, Ben, my boy, and you will one day be a commodore—by Jupiter, you'll be an honour to the navy.' I got as far as '*Dead Reckoning*,' and there I reckon I made a dead stand, or rather, I ceased to do anything but study '*Lunar Observations*.' Our owner had a daughter, my own age to a day. I can't describe her, sir; I haven't enough of what I suppose you would call poetry about me for that, but, upon the word of a sailor, her hair was like night rendered transparent—black, jet black; her neck white as the spray on the bosom of a billow; her face was lovelier than a rainbow; and her figure handsome as a frigate in full sail. But she had twenty thousand pounds—she was no bargain for orphan Ben! However, I saw her, and that was enough—learning and I shook hands. Her father had a small yacht—he proposed taking a pleasure party to the Coquet isle. Jess—for that was her name—was one of the passengers, and the management of the yacht was entrusted to me. In spite of mysel, I gazed upon her by the hour—I was intoxicated with passion—my heart swelled as if it would burst from my bosom. I saw a titled puppy touch her fingers—I heard him prattle love in her ears. My first impulse was to dash him overboard. I wished the sea which I loved might rise and swallow us. I thought it would be happiness to die in her company—perhaps to sink with her arm clinging round my neck for protection. The wish of my madness was verified. We were returning. We were five miles from the shore. A squall, then a hurricane, came on—every sail was reefed—the mast was snapped as I would snap that pipe between my fingers;'—(here the old Squire, suiting the action to the word, broke the end off his pipe;)—'the sea rose—the hurricane increased, the yacht capsized, as a feather twirls in the wind. Every soul that had been on board was now struggling for life—buffeting the billows. At that moment I had but one thought, and that was of Jess; but one wish, and that was to die with her. I saw my fellow-creatures in their death agonies, but I looked only for her. At the moment we were upset, she was clinging to the arm of the titled puppy for protection; and now I saw her within five yards of me still clinging to the skirts of his coat, calling on him and on her father to save her; and I saw him—yes, sir, I saw the monster, while struggling with one hand, raise the other to strike her on the face, that he might extricate himself from her grasp. Brute!—monster!' I exclaimed; and the next moment I had fixed my clenched hands in the hair of his head. Then, with one hand, I grasped the arm of her I loved; and, with the other, uttering a fiendish yell, I endeavoured to hurl the coward to the bottom of the sea. The yacht still lay bottom up, but was now a hundred yards from us; however, getting my arm round the waist of my adored Jess—I laughed at the sea—I defied the hurricane. We reached the yacht. Her keel was not three feet out of the water; and, with my right hand, I managed to obtain a hold of it. I saw two of the crew and six of the

passengers perish; but her father, and the coward who had struck her from him, still struggled with the waves. They were borne far from us. Within half an hour I saw a vessel pick them up. It tried to reach us, but could not. Two hours more had passed, and night was coming on—my trength gave way—my hold loosened—I made one more desperate effort, I fixed my teeth in the keel—but the burden under my left arm was still sacred—I felt her breath upon my cheek—it inspired me with a lion's strength, and for another hour I clung to the keel. Then the fury of the storm slackened;—a boat from the vessel that had picked up her father, reached us—we were taken on board. She was senseless, but still breathed—my arm seemed glued round her waist. I was almost unconscious of everything, but an attempt to take her from me. My teeth gnashed when they touched my hand to do so. As we approached the vessel, those on board hailed us with three cheers. We were lifted on deck. She was conveyed to the cabin. In a few minutes I became fully conscious of our situation. Some one gave me brandy—my brain became on fire. 'Where is she?' I exclaimed—'did I not save her?—save her from the coward who would have murdered her?' I rushed to the cabin—she was recovering—her father stood over her—strangers were rubbing her bosom. Her father took my hand to thank me; but I was frantic—I rushed towards her—I bent over her—I pressed my lips to hers—I called her mine. Her father grasped me by the collar—'Boy, beggar, bastard!' he exclaimed. With his last word half of my frenzy vanished—for a moment I seized him by the throat—I cried, 'Repeat the word!'—I groaned in the agony of shame and madness. I rushed upon the deck—we were then within a quarter of a mile from the shore—I plunged overboard—I swam to the beach—I reached it."

I became interested in the narrative of the Squire, and I begged he would continue it with less rapidity. "Rapidity!" said he, fixing upon me a glance in which I thought there was something like disdain—"youngster, if you cast a feather into the stream it will be borne on with it. But," added he, in a less hurried tone, after pausing to breathe for a few moments—"after struggling with the strong surge for a good half hour, I reached the shore. My utmost strength was spent, and I was scarce able to drag myself a dozen yards beyond tide-mark, when I sank exhausted on the beach. I lay, as though in sleep, until night had gathered round me; and when I arose, cold and benumbed, my delirium had passed away. My bosom, however, like a galley manned with criminals, was still the prison-house of agonising feelings, each more unruly than another. Every scene in which I had borne a part during the day, rushed before me in a moment—her image—the image of my Jess, mingled with each; I hated existence—I almost despised myself; but tears started from my eyes—the suffocation in my breast passed away, and I again breathed freely. I will not trouble you with details. I will pass over the next five years of my life, during which I was man-of-war's man, privateer, and smuggler. But I will tell you how I became a smuggler, for that calling I only followed for a week, and that was from necessity; but, as you shall hear, it well nigh cost me my life. Britain had just launched into a war with France, and I was first mate of a small privateer, carrying two guns and a long Tom. We were trying our fortune within six leagues of the Dutch coast, when two French merchantmen hove in sight. They were too heavy metal for us, and we saw that it would be necessary to deal with them warily. So, hoisting the republican flag, we bore down upon them; but the Frenchmen were not to be had; and no sooner had we come within gunshot, than one of them saluted our little craft with a broadside that made her dance in the water. It was evident there was no chance for us but at close quarters. 'Cookson' says our commander to me. 'what's to be done, my lad?' 'Leave the privateer' says I. 'What!' says he, 'take the long boat and run, without singing a Frenchman's whisker!—no, blow me, says he. 'No, sir,' says I, 'board them—give them a touch of the cold steel.' 'Right, Ben, my boy, says he; 'helm about there—look to your cutlasses, my hearties—and now for the Frenchman's deck, and French wine to supper.' The next moment we had tacked about, and were under the Frenchman's bow. In turning round, long Tom had been discharged, and clipped the rigging of the other vessel beautifully. The commander, myself, and a dozen more, sprang upon the enemy's deck, cutlass in hand. Our reception was as warm as powder and steel could make it—the Frenchmen fought like devils, and disputed with us every inch of the deck hand to hand. But, d'ye see, we beat them aft, though their numbers were two to one; yet, as bad luck would have it, out of the twelve of us who had boarded her, only seven were now able to handle a cutlass; and amongst those who lay dying on the enemy's deck, was our gallant commander. He was a noble fellow, sir—a regular fire-eater, even in death. Bleeding, dying as he was, he endeavoured to drag his body along the deck to assist us—and when finding it would not do, and he could move no farther, he drew a pistol from his belt, and raising himself on one hand, he discharged it at the head of the French captain with the other—and shouting out—'Go it, my hearties!—Ben! never yield!' his head fell upon the deck—and 'he died like a true British sailor.' But, sir, the other vessel that had been crippled, at that moment made alongside. Her crew also boarded to assist their countrymen, and we were attacked fore and aft There was nothing now left for us but to cut our way to the privateer, which had been brought round to the other side of the vessel we had boarded. She had been left to the care of the second mate and six seamen; but the traitor, seeing our commander fall, and the hopelessness of our success, cut the lashings, and bore off, leaving us to our fate on the deck of the enemy. Our number was now reduced to five, and we were hemmed in on all sides but we fought like tigers bereaved of their cubs. We placed ourselves heel to heel, we formed a little circle of death. I know not whether it was admiration of our courage, or the cowardice of the enemy, that induced them to proclaim a truce, and to offer us a boat, oars, and provisions, and to depart with our arms. We agreed to their proposal, after fighting an hour upon their deck. And here begins my short, but eventful history as a smuggler. We had been six hours at sea in the open boat, when we were picked up by a smuggling lugger named the Wildfire. Her captain was an Englishman, and her cargo, which consisted principally of brandy and Hollands, was to be delivered a Spittal and Boomer. It was about daybreak on the third morning after we had been picked up; we were again within sight of the Coquet isle. I had not seen it for five years It called up a thousand recollections—I became entranced in the past. My Jess seemed again clinging to my neck—I again thought I felt her breath upon my cheek—and again involuntarily I exclaimed aloud, '*She shall be mine.*' But I was aroused from my reverie by a cry—'A cruiser—a cutter a-head!' In a moment the deck of the lugger became a scene of consternation. The cutter was making upon us rapidly; and though the Wildfire sailed nobly, her pursuer skimmed over the sea like a swallow. The skipper of the lugger seemed to become insane as the danger increased. He ordered every gun to be loaded, and a six-oared gig to be got in readiness. The cutter fired on us, the Wildfire returned the salute, and three of the cutter's men fell. A few more shots were exchanged, and the lugger was disabled; her skipper and the Englishmen of his crew took the gig, and made for the shore. In a few minutes more, we were boarded by the commander of the cutter, and a part of her crew I knew the commander's face; his countenance—his name—were engraved as with a sharp instrument

on my heart. His name was Melton—the Honourable Lieutenant Melton—my enemy—the man I hated—the titled puppy of whom I spoke—my rival for the hand of my Jess. He approached me—he knew me as I did him—we lost no love between us—I heard his teeth grate as he fixed his eyes on me, and mine echoed to the sound.

Slave!—scoundrel!' were his first words—'we have met again at last, and your life shall pay the forfeit—place him in irons.'—'Coward!' I hurled in his teeth a second time, and my hand grasped my cutlass, which in a moment flashed in the air. His armed crew sprang between us—I defied them all—he grew bold under their protection. 'Strike him down!' he exclaimed, and, springing forward, his sword entered my side—but scarce was it withdrawn ere *his* blood streamed from the point of my cutlass to my hand. Suffice it to say, I was overpowered and disarmed—I was taken on board his cutter and put in irons. And now, sir," continued the Squire, raising his voice, for the subject seemed to wound him, "know that you are in the company of a man who has been condemned to die—yes, sir, to die like a common murderer on the gallows! You start—but it is true; and if you like not the company of a man for whom the hangman once provided a neckerchief, I will drop my story."—I requested him to proceed. "Well, sir," continued he, "I was lodged in prison. I was accused of being a smuggler—of having drawn my sword against one of his Majesty's officers—of having wounded him. On the testimony of my enemy and his crew, I was tried and condemned—condemned to die without hope of pardon. I had but a day to live, when a lady entered my miserable cell. She came to comfort the criminal, to administer consolation in his last hour. I was in no mood to listen to the admonitions of the female Samaritan, and I was about to bid her depart from me. Her face was veiled, and in the dim light of my dungeon I saw it not. But she spoke, and her voice went through my soul like the remembrance of a national air which we have sung in childhood, and hear in a foreign land. 'Lady!' I exclaimed, 'what fiend hath sent thee? Come ye to ask me to forgive my murderer?—if *you* command it I will.' 'I would ask you to forgive your enemies,' replied she, mildly; 'but not for my sake.' 'Yet it can only be for *your* sake,' said I; 'but tell me, lady, are you the *wife* of the man who has pursued me to death?' 'No—not his wife.' 'But you will be?' cried I, hastily; 'and you love him—tell me, do you not love him?' She sighed—she burst into tears. 'Unhappy man,' she returned, 'what know you of me that you torment me with questions that torture me?' I thrust forth my fettered hand—I grasped hers—'Tell me, lady,' I exclaimed, 'before my soul can receive the words of repentance which you come to preach—tell me—do you *love* him?'—'No!' she pronounced, emphatically, and her whole frame shook. 'Thank God!' I cried, and clasped my fettered hands together. 'Forgive me, lady forgive me! Do you know me—I am Ben!—orphan Ben—the boy who saved you!'—She screamed aloud—she fell upon my bosom, and my chained arm once more circled the neck of my Jess.

"Yes, sir, it was my own Jess, who, without being conscious who I was, had come to visit the doomed one in his miserable cell, to prepare him for death, by pointing out the necessity of repentance and the way to heaven. I need not tell you that the moment my name was told, she forgot her mission: and as, with my fettered arms, I held her to my breast, and felt her burning tears drop upon my cheek, I forgot imprisonment, I forgot death—my very dungeon became a heaven that I would not have exchanged for a throne—for, oh! as her tears fell, and her heaving bosom throbbed upon my heart, each throb told me that Jess loved the persecuted orphan—the boy who saved her. I cannot tell you what a trance is; but, as I clung round her neck, and her arms encircled mine, I felt as if my very soul would have burst from my body in ecstasy. She was soon convinced that I was no criminal—that I had been guilty of no actual crime—that I was innocent and doomed to die. 'No! no! you shall not die!' sobbed my heroic girl—'hope! hope! hope!—the man who saved me shall not die!' She hurried to the door of my cell—it was opened by the keeper, and she left me, exclaiming, 'Hope!—hope!' On that day his then Majesty, George III., was to prorogue Parliament in person. He was returning from the House of Lords; crowds were following the royal procession, and thousands of spectators lined Parliament Street, some shewing their loyalty by shouts and the waving of hats and of handkerchiefs, and others manifesting their discontent in sullen silence, or half-suppressed murmurs. In the midst of the multitude, and opposite Whitehall, stood a private carriage, the door of which was open, and out of it, as the royal retinue approached issued a female, and, with a paper in her hand, knelt before the window of his Majesty's carriage, clasping her hands together as she knelt, and crying—'Look upon me, sire!'—'Stop!—stop!' said the King—'coachman, stop!—what—a lady kneeling, eh—eh? A young lady, too!—poor thing—poor thing—give me the paper.' His Majesty glanced at it—he desired her to follow him to St James's. I need not dwell upon particulars; that very night my Jess returned to my prison with my pardon in her hand, and I left its gloomy walls with her arm locked in mine. And now you may think that I was the happiest dog alive—that I had nothing more to do but to ask and obtain the hand of my Jess—but you are wrong; and I will go over the rest of my life as briefly as I can. No sooner did her father become acquainted with what she had done, than he threatened to disinherit her—and he removed her I know not where. I became first desperate, then gloomy, and eventually sank into lassitude.—Even the sea which I had loved from my first thought, lost its charms for me. I fancied that money only stood between me and happiness—and I saw no prospect of making the sum I thought necessary at sea. While in the privateer service, I had saved about two hundred pounds in prize-money. With this sum as a foundation, I determined to try my fortune on shore. I embarked in many schemes; in some I was partially successful—but I persevered in none. It was the curse of my life that I had no settled plan—I wanted method; and let me tell you, sir, that the want of a systematic plan, the want of method, has ruined many a wise man. It was my ruin. From this cause, though I neither drank nor gamed, nor seemed more foolish than my neighbours, my money wasted like a snowball in the sun. Though I say it myself, I was not an ignorant man—for, considering my opportunities, I had read much, and I had as much worldly wisdom as most of people. In short, I was an excellent framer of plans at night; but I wanted decision and activity to put them into execution in the morning. I had also a dash of false pride and generosity in my composition, and did actions without considering the consequences, by which I was continually bringing myself into difficulties. This system, or rather this want of system, quickly stripped me of my last shilling, and left me the world's debtor into the bargain. Then, sir, I gnashed my teeth together—I clenched my fist—I could have cut the throat of my own conscience, had it been a thing of flesh and blood, for spitting my thoughtlessness and folly in my teeth. I took no oath,—but I resolved, firmly, resolutely, deeply resolved, to be wise for the future; and, let me tell you, my good fellow, such a resolution is worth twenty hasty oaths. I sold my watch, the only piece of property worth twenty shillings that I had left, and with the money it produced in my pocket, I set out for Liverpool. That town, or city, or whatever you have a mind to call it, was not then what it is now. I was strolling along by the Duke's little Dock, and saw a schooner of about a hundred and sixty tons burden. Her masts lay well back, and I observed her decks were

double laid. I saw her character in a moment. I went on board—I inquired of the commander if he would ship a hand. He gave me a knowing look, and inquired if ever I had been in the *trade* before. I mentioned my name and the ship in which I had last served. 'The deuce you are!' he said; 'what! you Cookson!—ship you, ay, and a hundred like you, if I could get them.' I need hardly tell you the vessel was a privateer. Within three days the schooner left the Mersey, and I had the good fortune to be shipped as mate. For two years we boxed about the Mediterranean, and I had cleared, as my share of prize-money, nearly a thousand pounds. At that period, our skipper, thinking he had made enough, resigned the command in favour of me. My first cruise was so successful that I was enabled to purchase a privateer of my own, which I named the *Jess*. For, d'ye see, her idea was like a never-waning moonlight in my brain—her emphatic words, 'Hope!—hope!—hope!' whispered eternally in my breast—and I did hope. Sleeping or waking, on sea or on shore, a day never passed but the image of my Jess arose on my sight, smiling and saying—'Hope!' In four years more, I had cleared ten thousand pounds, and I sold the schooner for another thousand. I now thought myself a match for Jess, and resolved to go to the old man—her father, I mean—and offer to take her without a shilling. Well, I had sold my craft at Plymouth, and, before proceeding to the north, was stopping a few days in a small town in the south-west of England, to breathe the land air—for my face, you see, had become a little rough, by constant exposure to the weather. Well, sir, the windows of my lodging faced the jail, and, for three days, I observed the handsomest figure that ever graced a woman, enter the prison at meal-times. It was the very figure—the very gait of my Jess—only her appearance was not genteel enough. But I had never seen her face. On the fourth day, I got a glimpse of it. Powers of earth! it was her!—it was my Jess! I rushed down stairs like a madman—I flew to the prison-door and knocked. The jailor opened it. I eagerly inquired who the young lady was that had just entered. He abruptly replied—'The daughter of a debtor.' 'For Heaven's sake,' I returned, 'let me speak with them.' He refused. I pushed a guinea into his hand, and he led me to the debtor's room. And there, sir—there stood my Jess—my saviour—my angel—there she stood, administering to the wants of her grey-haired father. I won't, because I can't, describe to you the tragedy scene that ensued. The old man had lost all that he possessed in the world—his thousands had taken wings and flown away, and he was now pining in jail for fifty—and his daughter, my noble Jess, supported him by the labours of her needle. I paid the debt before I left the prison, and out I came, with Jess upon one arm, and the old man on the other. We were married within a month. I went to sea again—but I will pass over that; and when the peace was made, we came down here to Northumberland, and purchased a bit of ground and a snug cabin, about five miles from this, and there six little Cooksons are romping about, and calling my Jess their mother, and none of them orphans, like their father, thank Heaven! And now, sir, you have heard the narrative of Squire Ben—what do you think of it?"

THE FAIR.

You may smile, reader, at the idea of a story entitled—The Fair; but read on, and you may find it an appropriate title to a touching, though simple tale. This may seem like the writer's praising his own production—but that is neither here nor there amongst authors—it is done every day; and not amongst authors only, but amongst all trades, crafts, and professions. If a man does not speak well of his own wares, whom does he expect to do it for him, when every person is busy selling wares of his own? You know the saying—"He's a silly gardener that lichtlies his ain leeks." But to go on with The Fair. On a Fair day, nature always turns out hundreds of her best human specimens of unsophisticated workmanship. Did you ever examine the countenances of a rustic group around a stall covered with oranges and sweetmeats—a bevy of rural beauties, besieging the heart and the pockets of a rural bachelor of two-and-twenty. The colour of one countenance is deep and various as the rainbow—a second emulates the rose—a third the carnation—while the face of a fourth, who is deemed the old maid of her companions, is sallow as a daffodil after a north wind. There blue eyes woo, and dark eyes glance affection, and ruby lips open with the jocund laugh; and there, too, you may trace the workings of jealousy, rivalry, and envy, and other passions less gentle than love, according as the oranges and gingerbread happen to be divided amongst the fair recipients. You, too, have heard the drum beat for glory, and the shrill note of the fife ring through the streets, while a portly sergeant, with a sword bright as a sunbeam, and unsheathed in his hand, flaunted his smart cockade, or belike shook a well-lined purse as he marched along, or, halting at intervals, shook it again, while he harangued the gaping crowd—"Now, my lads—now is the time for fortune and glory! There, by Jupiter! there is the look—the shoulders—the limbs—the gait of a captain at least! Join us, my noble fellow, and your fortune is made—your promotion is certain! God save the King! Down with the French!"—"Down wi' them!" cries a young countryman, flushed with "the barley bree," and, borrowing the sword of the sergeant, waves it uncouthly round his head—feels himself a hero—a Sampson—a Cæsar—all the glories of Napoleon seem extinguished beneath his sword-arm. "Down wi' them!" he cries again more vehemently, and again—"Hurra for the life of a sodger!"—and the next moment the ribbon streams from his Sunday hat. On such incidents turns our present story. Willie Forbes was a hind in Berwickshire. He was also the only child and the sole support of a widowed mother, and she loved him as the soul loveth the hope of immortality; for Willie was a dutiful son and a kind one, and, withal, one of whom many mothers in Scotland might have been proud; for his person was goodly as his heart was affectionate; and often as his mother surveyed his stately figure, she thought to herself—as a mother will—that "there wasna a marrow to her Willie in a' braid Scotland." Now, it chanced that, before Willie had completed his twenty-third year, they were "in need of a bit lassie," as his mother said, "to keep up the bondage." Willie, therefore, went to Dunse hiring, to engage a servant; but, as fate would have it, he seemed to fix upon the most unlikely maiden for field-work in the market. At a corner of the market-place, as if afraid to enter the crowd, stood a lovely girl of about eighteen. Her name was Menie Morrison. "Are ye for hiring the day, hinny?" said Willie, kindly. "Yes," was the low and faltering reply. "And what place was ye at last?" "I never was in service," said she; and as she said this, she faltered more. "An' where does your father live—what is he?" continued Willie. "He is dead," answered Menie, with a sigh. Willie paused a few moments, and added—"And your mother?" "Dead, too!" replied the maiden; and tears gushed into her eyes. "Puir thing!—puir thing!" said Willie—"weel, I'm sure I dinna ken what to say till't." "You may look at this," said she; and she put into his hands a slip of paper. It was her character from the minister of the parish where she had been brought up. "That's very excellent," said Willie, returning the paper—"very satisfactory—very, indeed. But—can ye—can ye hoe?" added he, hesitatingly. "Not well," answered she. "I like that, that's honest," added he; "hocin's easy learned. Can ye

milk a cow?" "No," she replied. "That's a pity," returned Willie. But he looked again in her face; he saw the tear still there. It was like the sun gilding a summer cloud after a shower—it rendered her face more beautiful. "Weel, it's nae great matter," added he; "my mother can learn ye." And Willie Forbes hired Menie Morrison through his heart. In a short time, Menie became an excellent servant. Willie and his mother called her—"*our* Menie." She loved her as a daughter, he as a man loveth the wife of his bosom; and Menie loved both in return. She had been two years in their service, and the wedding-day of Menie and Willie was to be in three months. For a few weeks, Willie, from his character and abilities, had been appointed farm-steward. He looked forward to the day when he should be able to take a farm of his own, and Menie would be the mistress of it. But Berwick Fair came—Willie had a cow to sell, and Menie was to accompany him to the fair. Now, the cow was sold, and Willie was "gallanting" Menie and three or four of her companions about the streets. He could not do less than bestow a fairing upon each; and he led them to a booth where the usual luxuries of a fair were spread out. At the booth, Willie found his master's daughter with some of her own acquaintances. She was dressed more gaily than Menie Morrison, and her face was also fair to look upon, but it wanted the soul, the charm that glowed in the countenance of the humble orphan. It had long been whispered about the farm-stead, and at the farm-steads around it, that "Miss Jean was fond o' Willie Forbes;" and some even said that it was through her partiality he obtained his stewardship. Menie had heard this, and it troubled her; for the breeze that scarce moves the down on the thistle, will move the breast of a woman that loves. Miss Jean accosted the young steward for her fairing. "Ye shall hae that," said Willie, "but there's naething guid eneugh here for the like o' *you*—come awa to ane o' the shops." So saying, he disengaged his arm from Menie Morrison's, and without thinking of what he did, offered it to his master's daughter, and left Menie and her friends at the booth. Poor Menie stood motionless, a mist seemed to gather before her eyes, and the crowd passed before her as a dream. 'Ye see how it is," observed her companions; "*naething here guid eneugh for her!*—if ye speak to him again Menie, ye deserve to beg on the causie! Her pride was wounded—her heart was touched—a cloud fell upon her affections. Such is human nature that it frequently happens revenge and love are at each other's elbows. Now, Menie was not without other admirers; and it so happened that one of these, who had more pretensions to this world's goods than Willie Forbes, came up at the moment, while her bosom was struggling with bitter feelings. For the first time, Menie turned not away at his approach. He was more liberal in his fairings than Willie could have been. As the custom then was, and in some instances still is, they heard the sounds of music and dancing. Willie's rival pressed Menie and her companions to "step up and hae a reel." They complied, and she accompanied them, scarce knowing what she did.

In a few minutes, Willie returned to the booth, but Menie was not there. His eye wandered among the crowd—he walked up and down the streets, but he found her not. Something told him he had done wrong—he had slighted Menie. At length a "good-natured friend" informed him she was dancing with young Laird Lister. The intelligence was wormwood to his spirit. He hastened to the dancing-room, and there he beheld Menie, "the observed of all observers," gliding among her rustic companions lightly as you have seen a butterfly kiss a flower. For a moment and he was proud to look upon her as the queen of the room; but he saw his rival hand her to a seat and his blood boiled. He approached her. She returned his salutation with a cold glance. Another reel had been danced—Willie offered her his hand for her partner in the next. I'm engaged," said the hitherto gentle Menie; "but maybe Miss Jean will hae nae objections—*if there's onything guid eneugh for her here.*" At that moment, Willie's rival put his arm through Menie's—she stood by his side—the music struck up, and away they glided through the winding dance! Willie uttered a short, desperate oath, which we dare not write, and hurried from the room. But scarce had he left, till confusion and a sickness of heart came upon Menie. She went wrong in the dance—she stood still—her bosom heaved to bursting—she uttered a cry, and fell upon the floor.

She, in her turn, felt that she had done wrong, and, on recovering, she left her companions, and returned home alone She doubted not but Willie was there before her. The road seemed longer than it had ever done before; for her heart was heavy. She reached his mother's cottage. She listened at the door—she heard not Willie's voice; and she trembled, she knew not why. She entered. The old woman rose to meet her. "Weel, hinny," said she, "hae ye got back again? What sort o' a fair has there been? Where is Willie?" Menie turned towards the bink, to lay aside her bonnet, and was silent. "What's the matter wi' ye, bairn?" continued the old woman—"is Willie no wi' ye—where is he?" "He is comin', *I fancy*," returned Menie; and she sobbed as she spoke. "Bairn! bairn! there's something no richt," cried the mother, "between ye. Some foolish quarrel, I warrant. But tell me what he's done; and for sending my Menie hame greetin', I'll gie him a hame-comin'!" "No, no, it wasna Willie's wyte," replied Menie, "it was mine—it was a' mine. But dinna be angry." And here the maiden unbosomed her grief, and the old woman took part with her, saying—"Son as he's mine, ye just served him as he deserved, Menie." Her heart grew lighter as her story was told, and they sat by the window together, watching one party after another return from the fair. But Willie was not amongst them, and as it began to wax late, and acquaintances passed, Menie ran to inquire of them if they had seen anything of Willie; and they shook their heads and said—"No." And it grew later and later, till the last party who left the fair, had passed—singing as they went along; but still there were no tidings of Willie. Midnight came, and the morning came, but he came not. His mother became miserable, and, in the bitterness of her heart, she upbraided Menie, and Menie wept the more. They sat watching through the night and through the morning, listening to every sound. They heard the lark begin his song, the poultry leap from their roost, the cows low on the milk-maidens, and the ploughman prepare for the field; yet Willie made not his appearance. Time grew on till mid-day, and the misery of the mother and of Menie increased. The latter was still dressed in the apparel she had worn on the previous day, and the former throwing on her Sunday gown, they proceeded to the town together to seek for him. They inquired as they went along, and from one they received the information—"I thought I saw him wi' the sodgers in the afternoon." The words were as if a lightning had fallen on Menie's heart—his mother wrung her hands in agony, and cried—"My ruined bairn!" And she cast a look on poor Menie that had more meaning than kindness in it.

They reached the town, and as they reached it, a vessel was drawing from the quay—she had recruits on board, who were to be landed at Chatham, from whence they were to be shipped to India. Amongst those recruits was Willie Forbes. When he rushed in madness from the dancing-room, he met a recruiting party on the street—he accompanied them to their quarters—he drank with them—our of madness and revenge he drank—he enlisted—he drank again—his indignation kindled against Menie and against his rival—he again swore at the remembrance of her refusing him her hand—he drank deeper—his parent was forgotten—he took the bounty—he was sworn in—and while

the fumes of the liquor yet raged in his brain, maddening him on and drowning reflection, he was next day embarked for Chatham. The vessel had not sailed twenty yards from the quay—Willie and his companions were waving their hats, and giving three cheers as they pulled off—when two women rushed along the quay. The elder stretched out her arms to the vessel—she cried wildly—"Gie me back my bairn!—Willie! Willie Forbes!" He heard her screams above the huzza of the recruits—he knew his mother's voice—he saw his Menie's dishevelled hair; the poisonous drink died within him—his hat dropped from his hand—he sprang upon the side of the vessel—he was about to plunge into the river, when he was seized by the soldiers and dragged below. A shriek rang from his mother and from Menie; those who stood around them tried to comfort and pity them; and, by all but themselves, in a few days the circumstance was forgotten.

"Who will provide for me now, when my Willie is gane?" mourned the disconsolate widow, when the first days of her grief had passed. "I will," answered Menie Morrison; "and your home shall be my home, and my bread your bread, and the Husband o' the widow, and the Father o' the orphan, will bring our Willie back again." The old woman pressed her to her breast, and called her—"her mair than daughter." They left the farm-stead, and rented a very small cottage at some miles' distance, and there, to provide for her adopted mother, Menie kept two cows; and, in the neighbouring markets, her butter was first sold, and her poultry brought the best price. But she toiled in the harvest-field—she sewed, she knitted, she span—she was the laundress of the gentry in the neighbourhood—she was beloved by all, and nothing came wrong to bonny Menie Morrison. Four years had passed, and they had twice heard from Willie, who had obtained the rank of sergeant. But the fifth year had begun, and, from a family in the neighbourhood, Menie had received several newspapers, that, as she said, she "might read to her mother what was gaun on at the wars." She was reading an account of one of the first victories of Wellington in the east, and she passed on to what was entitled a GALLANT EXPLOIT. Her voice suddenly faltered—the paper shook in her hands. "What is't—oh! what is't, Menie?" cried the old woman; "is't onything aboot Willie?—My bairn's no dead?" Menie could not reply; she pressed her hand before her eyes and wept aloud. "My son! my son!" exclaimed the wretched widow—"oh! is my bairn dead?" The paragraph which had filled Menie with anguish, stated that a daring assault had been led on by Sergeant Forbes of the 21st, after his superiors had fallen; but that *he also fell mortally wounded* in the moment of victory. I will not attempt to paint their sorrow. Menie put on the garments of widowhood for Willie, and she mourned for him not only many but every day. He had fallen in the arms of glory, yet she accused herself as his murderer.

Five years more had passed. It was March; but the snow lay upon the ground, and the face of the roads was as glass. A stranger gentleman had been thrown from his horse in the neighbourhood of the widow's cottage. His life had been endangered by the fall, and he was conveyed beneath her lowly roof, where he remained for weeks, unable to be removed. He was about fifty or sixty years of age, and his dress and appearance indicated the military officer. Menie was his nurse; and if her beauty and kindness did not inspire the soul of the veteran with love, they moved it with sympathy. He wished to make her a return, and, at length, he resolved that that return should be an offer of his hand. He knew he was in his "sere and yellow leaf," and his face was marked with wounds; but for those wounds he had a pension; he had his half-pay as Major, and three thousand pounds in the funds. He would shew his gratitude by tendering his hand and fortune to the village maiden. He made known his proposal to the old woman—maternal feeling suggested her first reply: "She was to be my Willie's wife," said she, ruefully, and wiped away a tear—"she was to be my daughter—and she *is* my daughter—I canna part wi' my Menie." But prudence at length prevailed, and she added—"But why should she be buried for me? No, sir, I winna wrang her—ye are owre kind—yet she deserves it a', an' I will advise her as though she had been my ain bairn." But Menie refused to listen to them.

When the sun began to grow warm in the heavens, a chair was brought to the door for the invalid, and Menie and her mother would sit spinning by his side, while he would recount his "battles, sieges, fortunes." And thus, in an evening in May, as the sun was descending on the hills ran his story—"Fifty of us were made prisoners. We were chained man to man, and cast into a dark, narrow, and damp dungeon. Our only food was a scanty handful of rice, and a cup of water once in twenty-four hours. Death, in mercy, thinned our numbers. A worse than plague raged amongst us—our dead comrades lay amongst our feet. The living lay chained to a corpse. All died but myself and my companion to whom I was fettered. He cheered me in fever and sickness. He took the water from his parched lips and held it to mine. And, maiden, I have been interested in you for his sake—for in his sleep he would start, and mention the name of Menie!"

"O sir!" interrupted Menie and the old woman at once, "what—what was his name?"

"If the world were mine, I would give it to know," replied the Major; and continued—"He succeeded in breaking our fetters. We were left unguarded. 'Let us fly,' said he; but I was unable to follow him. He took me upon his shoulders. It was midnight. He bore me to the woods. For five days he carried me along, or supported me on his arm, till we were within sight of the British lines. There a party of native horsemen came upon us. My deliverer, with no weapon but a branch which he had torn from a tree, defended himself like a lion in its desert. But he fell wounded, and was taken prisoner. A company of our troops came to our assistance—I was rescued—but my noble deliverer was borne again into the interior; and three years have passed, and I have heard no more of him."

"But it is five years since my Willie fell," sighed Menie Morrison. Yet she brooded on the word—*Menie.*

A wayfaring man was seen approaching the cottage. As he drew near, the eyes of the Major glistened—his lips moved—he threw down his crutch. He started, unaided, to his feet—"Gracious Heaven!—it is himself!" he exclaimed; "my companion!—my deliverer!"

The stranger rushed forward with open arms—"Menie!—mother!" he cried, and speech failed him. It was Willie Forbes! Menie was on his bosom—his mother's arms were round his neck—the old Major grasped his hand. Reader, need I tell you more. Willie Forbes had fallen wounded, as was thought, mortally; but he had recovered. He had been made a prisoner. He was returned. Menie gave him her hand. The Major procured his discharge, and made him his heir. He took a farm; and on that farm the Major dwelt with them, and "fought his battles o'er again," to the children of Willie and Menie Forbes.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

ARCHY ARMSTRONG.

For thirty years, Sandy Armstrong of the Cleughfoot had been one of the most daring and successful freebooters of his clan. His name was a sound of terror on the Borders, and was alike disagreeable to Scotch and English ears; for, like Esau, Sandy's hand was against every man, and every man's hand against him. His clan had been long broken and without a leader, and the Armstrongs were regarded as outlaws by both nations. Cleughfoot, in which Sandy resided, was a small square building of prodigious strength; around it was a court-yard, or rather an enclosure for cattle, surrounded by a massy wall, in which was an iron gate strong as the wall itself. The door of the dwelling was also of iron, and the windows, which were scarce larger than loop-holes, were barred. It was generally known by the name of "Lang Sandy's *Keep*," and was situated on the side of the Tarras, about ten miles from Langholm. Around it was a desolate morass, the passes of which were known only to Sandy and his few followers, and beyond the morass was a decaying but almost impenetrable forest. Sandy, like his forefathers, knew no law, save

> "The good old law—the simple plan—
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can."

He had had seven sons, and of these five had fallen while following him in the foray, the sixth had been devoured by a blood-hound, and he had but one, Archy, his youngest, left, to whom he could bequeath his stronghold, a fleet steed, and his sword. Land he had none, and he knew not its value: he found it more profitable to levy black-mail, to the right and to the left, on Englishman and on Scot; and he laughed at the authority of Elizabeth and of James, and defied the power of the Wardens of their Marches—"Bess may be Queen o' England," said he, "and book-learned Jamie, King o' braid Scotland, but Sandy Armstrong is lord o' the wilds o' Tarras."

On the death of Elizabeth, Sandy and his handful of retainers had been out in the raid to Penrith; in that desperate attempt, some of them had fallen, and others had been seized and executed at Carlisle. But Sandy had escaped, driving his booty through the wilds before him to Cleughfoot. On one side of the court-yard stood a score of oxen and six fleet steeds, and on the other was provender for them for many days. On the flat roof of Cleughfoot Keep sat Sandy Armstrong; before him was a wooden stoup filled with *aqua vitæ*, and in his hand he held a small quegh, neatly hooped round, and formed of wood of various colours. It had a short handle for the finger and thumb, was about two inches in diameter, and three quarters of an inch in depth, and out of this vessel Sandy, ever and anon, quaffed his strong potations, while his son, Archy, a boy of twelve years old, stood by his side, receiving from his parent a Borderer's education. But, leaving the freebooter and his son on the turret of their fastness, we shall also, for a few moments, leave Dumfriesshire, and carrying back our narrative for some weeks, introduce the reader to the ancient town of Berwick-upon-Tweed.

On Wednesday, the 8th of April 1603, every soul in the good town of Berwick was up by daybreak;—wife and maiden flaunted in their newest gowns with ample fardingals, and the sweating mechanic looked as spruce in his well brushed "jack," as a courtly cavalier. By sunrise, the cannon thundered from the ramparts. Before noon, the Marshal, Sir John Carey, at the head of the garrison, composed of horse and foot, marched out of the town towards Lamberton, firing *feu-d'-joies* as they went, while the cannon still pealed and the people shouted. The thunder of the artillery became more frequent—the bells rang merrily—the volleys of the garrison became louder and more loud, as though they again approached, and "He comes!—He comes!" shouted the crowd; "Hurra! Hurra!—the King! the King!" The garrison again entered the town, they filed to the right and left, lining the street. In front of Marygate stood William Selby, the gentleman porter, with the keys of the town. The voice of the artillery, the muskets, and the multitude, again mingled together. James of Scotland and of England stood before the gate—Selby bent upon his knee, he placed the keys of the town in the hands of the monarch, who instantly returned them, saying, "Rise, *Sir* William Selby, an', saul o' me, man, but ye should take it as nae sma' honour to be the first knight made by James, by the grace of God, an' the love o' our gracious cousin, King o' England an' Scotland likewise.' His Majesty, followed by the multitude, proceeded down Marygate, through the files of the garrison, to the market-place, where the worshipful Hugh Gregson, the mayor, his brother aldermen, the bailiffs, and others of the principal burgesses, waited to receive him. The Mayor knelt and presented him with a purse of gold and the corporation's charter. "Ye are a leal and considerate gentleman," said the king, handing the purse to one of his attendants—"worthy friends are ye a'; and now take back your charter, an' ye sall find in us a gracious and affectionate sovereign, ready to maintain the liberty and privileges it confers upon our trusty subjects o' our town o' Berwick." Mr. Christopher Parkinson, the Recorder, then delivered a set and solemn speech, after which the king proceeded to the church, where the Rev. Toby Mathews, Bishop of Durham, preached a sermon suited to royal ears. On the following day, the demonstrations of rejoicing were equally loud, and his Majesty visited the garrison and fortifications; and as he walked upon the ramparts surrounded by lords from Scotland and from England, and while the people shouted, and the artillery belched forth fire, smoke, and thunder, the monarch, in order to give an unquestionable demonstration of his courage in the presence of his new subjects, boldly advanced to the side of one of the cannon, and took the match from the hands of the soldier who was about to fire it. Once---twice---thrice, the monarch stretched forth his hand to the touch-hole, but touched it not. It was evident the royal hand trembled—the royal eyes were closed—yea, the royal cheeks became pale. At length the quivering match touched the powder, back bounded the thundering cannon, and back sprang the terrified monarch, knocking one of his attendants down—dropping the match upon the ground, and thrusting his fingers in his ears—stammering out, as plainly as his throbbing heart would permit, that "he feared their drum was split in twa!" Scarce had his Majesty recovered from this demonstration of his bravery, when a messenger arrived with the intelligence that the Armstrongs and other clans had committed grievous depredations on the Borders, and had even carried their work of spoliation and plunder as far as Penrith.

"Borders, man!" quoth the king, "our kingdom hath nae *borders* but the sea. It is our royal pleasure that the word *borders* sall never mair be used: wat ye not that what were the *extremities* or *borders* o' the twa kingdoms, are but the *middle* o' *our* kingdom, an' in future it is our will an' decree that ye ca' them nae langer the borders, but the *middle* counties. An' now, Sir William Selby, as we were

graciously pleased yesterday by our ain hand, to confer on ye the high honour o' knighthood, tak ye twa hundred and fifty horsemen, and gae ye up our middle counties, commanding every true man in our name, capable o' bearing arms, to join ye in crushing and in punishing sic thieves and rievers; hang ilka Armstrong and Johnstone amang them that resists our royal will—an' make the iron yetts o' their towers be converted into ploughshares.—Away, sir, an' do your wark surely an' right quickly."

On the following day, Sir William Selby set out upon his mission; and before he had proceeded far, he found himself at the head of a thousand horsemen. They burned and destroyed the strongholds of the Borderers as they went, and the more desperate amongst them who fell into their hands were sent in fetters to Carlisle.

It was early in May, and the young leaves, bursting into beauty and being, were spreading their summer livery over Tarras forest, and the breeze wafted their grateful fragrance over the morass; even on the morass itself, a thousand simple flowers, like fragments of beauty scattered in handfuls amidst the wide-spread desolation, peeped forth; and over the sharp cry of the wheeling lapwing rang the summer hymn of the joyful lark, when, as we have before said, Sandy Armstrong sat on the turret of Cleughfoot with his son by his side.

"Archy," said the freebooter, "this warld is turning upside down, an' honest men hae nae chance in't. We hear o' naething noo but law! law! law!—but the fient a grain o' justice is to be met wi' on the Borders. A man canna take a bit beast or twa in an honest way, or make a bonfire o' an enemy's haystack, but there's naethin' for't but Carlisle and a hempen cravat. But mind, callant, ye ha'e the bluid o' the Armstrongs in your veins, and their hands never earned bread by ony instrument but the sword, and it winna be the son o' Sandy o' Cleughfoot that will disgrace his kith and kin by trudging at a ploughtail, or learning some beggarly handicraft. Swear to me, Archy, that ye will live by the sword like your faithers afore ye—swear to your faither, callant, an' fear neither Jamie Stuart, his twa kingdoms, nor his horsemen—they'll ha'e stout hearts that cross Tarras moss, and there will be few sheep in Liddesdale before the pot at Cleughfoot need nae skimming."

"I will live like my faither before me—king o' Tarras-side," said the youth.

"That shall ye, Archy," rejoined the freebooter; "an' though the Scotts an' the Elliots may, like fause louns, make obeisance to the king, and get braid lands for bending their knees, what cares Sandy Armstrong for their lands, their manrents, or their sheep-skins, scrawled owre by a silk-fingered monk—his twa-handed blade and his Jeddart-staff shall be a better title to an Armstrong than an acre o' parchment."

The boy caught the spirit of his sire, and flourished his Jedburgh-staff, or battle-axe, in his hand. The father raised the quegh to his lips—"Here's to ye, Archy," he cried, "ye'll be cooper o' Fogo!"

He crossed his arms upon his breast—he sat thoughtful for a few minutes, and again added—"Archy—but my heart fills to look on ye—ye are a brave bairn, but this is nae langer the brave man's country. Courage is persecuted, and knaves only are encouraged, that can scribble like the monks o' Melrose. Ye had sax brithers, Archy—sax lads whase marrows warna to be found on a' the lang Borders—wi' them at my back an' I could hae ridden north an' south, an' made the name o' Sandy Armstrong be feared; but they are gane—they're a' gane, and there's nane left but you to protect and defend your poor mother when I am gane too; and now they would hunt me like a deer if they durst, for they are butchering guid and true men for our bit raid to Penrith, as though the life o' an Armstrong were o' less value than an English nowt. If ye live to be a man, Archy, and to see your poor auld mother's head laid in the mould, take my sword and leave this poor, pitifu', king-ridden, an' bookruined country; an' dinna ye disgrace your faither by makin' bickers like the coopers o' Nicolwood, or pinglin wi' an elshin like the souters o' Selkirk."

The sluth-dog, which lay at their feet, started up, snuffed the air, growled and lashed its tail. "Ha! Tiger! what is't, Tiger?" cried Sandy, addressing the dog, and springing to his feet.

"Troopers! troopers, faither!" cried Archy, "an' they are comin' frae ilka side o' the forest."

"Get ready the dags,* Archy," said the freebooter; "it's twa lang spears' length to the bottom o' Tarras moss, an they'll be light men and lighter horses that find na a grave in't—get ready the dags, and cauld lead shall welcome the first man that mentions King Jamie's name before the walls o' Cleughfoot."

The boy ran and brought his father's pistols—his mother accompanied him to the turret. She gazed earnestly on the threatening bands of horsemen as they approached, for a few seconds, then taking her husband's hand—"Sandy," said she, "I hae lang looked for this; but others that are wives the now shall gang widows to bed the night as well as Elspeth Armstrong!"

"Fear naething, Elspeth, my doo," replied the riever; "there will be blood in the way if they attack the lion in his den. But there's a lang and tangled moss atween them an' Cleughfoot. We hae seen an enemy nearer an' be glad to turn back again."

"They will reach us, faither," cried Archy; "do ye no see they hae muffled men before them."

"Muffled men! then, bairn, your faither's betrayed!" exclaimed the freebooter, "an' there's naething but revenge and death left for Sandy Armstrong!"

He stalked rapidly around the turret—he examined his pistols, the edge of his sword, his Jedburgh-staff and his spear. Elspeth placed a steel cap on his head, and, from beneath it, his dark hair, mingled with grey, fell upon his brow. He stood with his ponderous spear in one hand and a pistol in the other, and the declining sun cast his shadow across the moss, to the very horses' feet of his invaders. Still the horsemen, who amounted to several hundreds, drew nearer and nearer on every side, and impenetrable as the morass was to strangers, yet, by devious windings, as a hound tracks its prey, the muffled men led them on, till they had arrived within pistol shot of Cleughfoot.

"What want ye, friends?" shouted the outlaw—"think ye that a poor man like Sandy Armstrong can gi'e upputtin' and provender for five hundred horse?"

"We come," replied an officer, advancing in front of the company, "by the authority o' our gracious prince, James king o' England and Scotland, and in the name o' his commissioner, Sir William Selby, to punish and hand over to justice Border thieves and outlaws, o' whom we are weel assured that you, Sandy Armstrong, o' the Cleughfoot, are, habit and repute, amangst the chief."

"Ye lie! ye lie!" returned the outlaw; "ye dyvors in scarlet an' cockades, ye lie! I hae lived thir fifty years by my ain hand, an' the man was never born that dared say Sandy Armstrong laid finger on the widow's cow or the puir man's mare, or that he scrimpt the orphan's meal. But I hae been a protector o' the poor and helpless, an' a defender o' the cowan-hearted, for a sma' but honest black-mail, that other men, wi' no half the strength o' Sandy Armstrong, wadna ta'en up at their foot."

"Do ye surrender in peace, ye boastin' rebel?" replied the herald, "or shall we burn your den about your ears?"

"I ken it is death ony way ye take it," rejoined the outlaw—"ye would shew me an' mine the mercy that was shewn to my kinsman, John o' Gilnokie,† and I shall surrender as an Armstrong surrenders—when the breath is out."

* Pistols. † This subject forms another of the Border Tales.

Fire flashed from a narrow crevice which resembled a cross in the turrets—the report of a pistol was heard, and the horse of the herald bounded, and fell beneath him.

"That wasna done like an Armstrong, Archy," said the freebooter; "ye hae shot the horse, an' it might hae been the rider—the man was but doing his duty, an' it was unfair and cowardly to fire on him till the affray began."

"I shall mind again, faither," said Archy, "but I thought, wi' sic odds against us, that every advantage was fair."

While these events transpired, Elspeth was busied placing powder and balls upon the roof of the turret; she brought up also a carabine, and putting it in her husband's hands, said—"Tak ye that, Sandy, to aim at their leaders, and gie Archy an' me the dags."

The horsemen encompassed the wall; Sandy, his wife, and his son, knelt upon the turret, keeping up, through the crevices, a hurried but deadly fire on their besiegers. It was evident the assailants intended to blow up the wall. The freebooter beheld the train laid, and the match applied. Already his last bullet was discharged. "Let us fire the straw among the cattle!" cried little Archy. "Weel thought, my bairn!" exclaimed the riever. The boy rushed down into the house, and in an instant returned with a flaming pine torch in his hand. He dropped it amongst the cattle. He dashed a handful of powder on the spot, and in a moment half of the court-yard burst into a flame. At the same instant a part of the court-wall trembled—exploded—fell. The horned cattle and the horses were rushing wildly to and fro through the fire. The invaders burst through the gap. Elspeth tore a pearl drop from her ears,* and, thrusting it in the pistol, discharged it at the head of the first man who approached the house. It was evident they intended to blow up the house as they had done the wall. Sandy had now no weapon that he could render effective but his speer, and he said—"They shall taste the prick o' the hedgehog before I die." He thrust it down furiously upon them, and several of them fell at his threshold, but the deadly instrument was grasped by a number of the besiegers, and wrenched from his hands.

The sun had already set, darkness was gathering over the morass, and still the fire burned, and the cattle rushed amongst the armed men in the court-yard.

"Elspeth," said the freebooter, "it is not your life they seek, and they canna hae the heart to harm our bairn. Gie me my Jeddart-staff in my hand—an' fareweel to ye, Elspeth—fareweel!—an eternal fareweel! Archy, fareweel, my gallant bairn.—never disgrace your faither!—but ye winna—ye winna—an' if I am murdered, mind ye revenge me, Archy! Now we maun unbar the door, an' I maun cut my way through them or perish."

Thus spoke the Borderer, and, with his battle-axe in his hand, he embraced his wife and his son, and wept. "Now, Archy," said he, "slip an' open the door—saftly!—saftly!—an' let me rush out."

Archy silently drew back the massy bars; in a moment the iron door stood ajar, and Sandy Armstrong, battle-axe in hand, burst into the court-yard, and into the midst of his besiegers. There was not a man amongst them that had not heard of the "terrible Jeddart-staff o' Sandy Armstrong." He cleaved them down before him—his very voice augmented their confusion—they shrank back at his approach; and while some fled from the enfuriated cattle, others fled from the arm of the freebooter. In a few second, he reached the gap in the court wall—he rushed upon the moss;—darkness had begun, and a thick vapour was rising from the morass. "Follow me who dare!" shouted Sandy Armstrong.

Archy withdrew into a niche in the passage, as his father pushed out;—and as the besiegers speedily burst into the house, amongst them was one of the muffled men* bearing a torch in his hand. Revenge fired the young Borderer, and, with his Jedburgh-staff, he made a dash at the hand of the traitor. The torch fell upon the floor, and with it three or the fingers that grasped it. The besiegers were instantly enveloped in gloom, and Archy, escaping from the niche from whence he had struck the blow, said unto himself—"I've gien ye a mark to find out wha ye are, neighbour."

The besiegers took possession of Cleughfoot, and the chief men of the party remained in it during the night, while a portion of their followers occupied the court-yard, and others, with their horses, remained on the morass. Archy and his mother were turned from their dwelling, and placed under a guard upon the moss, where they remained throughout the night; and, in the morning, Cleughfoot was blown up before them. They were conveyed as prisoners to Sir William Selby, who had fixed his quarters near Langholm.

"Whom do ye bring me here?" inquired the new-made knight; "a wife and bairn!—Hae ye been catching sparrows and let the eagle escape?—Whar hae ye the head and the hand o' the outlaw?"

"Troth, Sir Knight," replied an officer, "and his head is where it shouldna be—on his ain shouthers. At the darkenin' he escaped upon the moss; three troopers, guided by a muffler and a sluth-dog, pursued him; an', as we crossed the bog this mornin', we found ane o' the troopers sunk to the middle in't, an' his horse below him; and far'er on were the dead bodies o' the other twa, the sluth-dog, and the muffled man. I am sorry, therefore, to inform ye, Sir Knight, that Sandy Armstrong has escaped, but we hae made a bonfire o' his keep, an' brought ye his wife and his son—wha are Armstrongs, soul and body o' them—to do wi' them as ye may judge proper."

"Tuts, man," replied Sir William, "wad ye hae us to disgrace our royal commission by hangin' an auld wife an' a bairn? Gae awa, ye limmer, ye—gae awa wi' your brat," he added, addressing Elspeth, "an' learn to live like honest folk; or, if ye fa' in my way again, ye shall dance by the crook frae a woodie."

"Where can I gang?" said she, sorrowfully, as she withdrew. "O Archy! we hae neither house nor hauld—friend nor kindred!—an' wha will shelter the wife and bairn o' poor persecuted Sandy Armstrong!"

"Dinna fret, mother," said Archy; "though they hae burned Cleughfoot, the stanes are still left, an' I can soon big a bit place to stop in; nor, while there's a hare in Tarras wood, or a sheep on the Leadhills, shall ye ever want, mother."

They returned in sorrow to the heap of ruins that had been their habitation; and Elspeth, in the bitterness of her spirit, sat down upon the stones and wept. But after she had wept long, and the sound of her lamentation had howled across the desert, she arose, and assisted her son in constructing a hut from the ruins, in which they might lay their heads. In two days it was completed, but, on the third day, the disconsolate wife of the freebooter sank on her bed of rushes, and the sickness of death was in her heart.

"Oh, speak to me, mother!" cried Archy; "what—what can I do for ye?"

"Naethin', my bairn!—naethin'!" groaned the dying woman—"the sun's fa'in' dark on the een o' Elspeth Armstrong; but, oh, may the saunts o' heaven protect my poor Archy!"

She tried to repeat the only prayer she had ever learned—for religion was as little understood in the house of a freebooter as the eighth commandment. Poor Archy wrung his hands, and sobbed aloud.

Dinna die, mother—oh! dinna die!" he exclaimed, "or what will become o' your Archy!" He rushed from the

* The wives and daughters of the Borderers at this period wore numerous trinkets—spoils, no doubt presented them by their husbands and wooers.

* A muffled man was one who, for his future safety, assumed a mark or disguise in leading the enemy to the haunt of his neighbours or

hut, and with a broken vessel which he had found among the ruins, he brought water from the rivulet. He applied it to her lips—he bathed her brow—"O mother! mother, dinna die!" he cried again, "and I will get you bread too!" He again hurried from the hut, and bounded across the moss with the fleetness of a young deer. It was four long miles to the nearest habitation, and in it dwelt Ringan Scott, a dependant of the Buccleuchs. There had never been friendship between his family and that of Sandy Armstrong, but, in the agony of Archy's feelings, he stopped not to think of that nor of aught but his dying mother. He rushed into the house—"Gie me bread!" he exclaimed wildly, "for the love o' heaven gie me bread, for my mother is perishin'!"

"Let her perish!—an' may ye a' perish!" said a young man, the son of Ringan, who stood by the fire with his right hand in a sling, "ye's get nae bread here."

"I maun!—I shall!" cried Archy, vehemently. Half of a coarse cake lay upon the table, he snatched it up, and rushed out of the house. They pursued him for a time, but affection and despair gave wings to his speed. Breathless, he reached the wretched hut, and, on entering, he cried—Mother, here is bread! I have gotten't! I have gotten't!" But his mother answered him not. "Speak mother! O mother, speak!—here is bread now—eat it an' ye'll be better!" he cried, but his mother was still silent. He took her hand in his—"Are ye sleepin', mother?" he added—"here is bread!" He shook her gently, but she stirred not. He placed his hand upon her face, it was cold as the rude walls of the hut, and her extended arms were stiff and motionless. He raised them and they fell heavily and lifeless. "Mother!—mother!" screamed Archy; but his mother was dead! He rushed from the hut wildly, tearing his hair—he flung himself upon the ground—he called upon his father, and the glens of Tarras echoed the cry; but no father was near to answer. He flew back to the hut. He knelt by his mother's corpse—he rubbed her face and her bosom—he placed his lips to hers, and again he invoked her to speak. Night drew on, and, as darkness fell over the ghastly features of the corpse, he fled with terror from the hut, and wandered weeping throughout the night upon the moss. At sunrise he returned, and again sat down and wept by the dead body of his mother. He became familiar with death, and his terror died away. Two nights more passed on, and the boy sat in the desolate hut in the wilderness, watching and mourning over the lifeless body of his mother. On the fourth day, he took a fragment of the iron gate, and began to dig her grave. He raised the dead body in his arms, and weeping, screaming, as he went, he bore it to the tomb he had prepared for it. He gently placed it in the cold earth, and covered it with the moss and the green sod. All the day long he toiled in rolling and carrying stones from the ruins of his father's house, to erect a cairn over his mother's grave. When his task was done, he wrung his hands, and exclaimed, "Now, poor Archy Armstrong hasna a friend in the wide world!" While he yet stood mourning over the new-made grave, a party of horsemen, who were still in quest of his father, rode and accosted him. His tragic tale was soon told, and, in the bitterness of his heart, he accused them as being the murderers of his father and his mother. Amongst them was one of the chief men of the Elliot clan, who held lands in the neighbourhood. He felt compassion for Archy, and he admired his spirit; and, desiring him to follow him, he promised to provide for him. Archy reluctantly obeyed, and he was employed to watch the sheep of his protector on the hills.

Eighteen years passed away. Archy was now thirty years of age; he had learned to read, and even to write, like the monks that were in Melrose. He was the principal herdsman of his early benefactor, and was as much beloved as his father had been feared; But at times the spirit of the freebooter would burst forth; and he had not forgiven the persecutors, or, as he called them, the murderers of his parents. Amongst these was one called "Fingerless Dick," the son of Ringan Scott, of whom we have spoken. Archy had long known that he was one of the muffled men who had conducted Selby's horsemen to his father's house, and that he was the same from whose hand he dashed the torch with his battle-axe. Now, there was to be a football fray in Liddesdale, and the Borderers thronged to it from many miles. Archy was there, and there also was his enemy—"Fingerless Dick." They quarrelled—they closed—both came to the ground, but Scott was undermost. He drew his knife—he stabbed his antagonist in the side---he was repeating the thrust, when Archy wrenched the weapon from his hand, and, in the fury of the moment, plunged it in his breast. At first the wound was believed to be mortal, and an attempt was made to seize Archy, but clutching an oaken cudgel from the hands of one who stood near him—"Lay hands on me wha dare!" he cried, as he brandished it in the air, and fled at his utmost speed.

Archy knew that though his enemy might recover, the Scotts would let loose the tender mercies of the law upon his head, and instead of returning to the house of his master, he sought safety in concealment.

On the third day after the fray in Liddesdale, he entered Dumfries. He was weary and wayworn, for he had fled from hill to hill, and from glen to glen, fearing pursuit. He inquired for a lodging, and was shewn to a small house near the foot of a street leading to the river, and which we believe is now called the Bank Vennel; and in which he was told "the pig folk and other travellers put up for the night." There was a motley group in the house, beggars and chapmen, and amongst the former was an old man of uncommon stature; and his hair, as white as snow, descended down upon his shoulders. His beard was of equal whiteness, and fell upon his breast. An old grey cloak covered his person, which was fastened round his body with a piece of rope instead of a girdle. He appeared as one who had been in foreign wars, and he wore a shade or patch over his left eye. He spoke but little, but he gazed often and wistfully on the countenance of Archy, and more than once a tear found its way down his weather-beaten cheeks. In the morning when Archy rose to depart, "Whither gang ye, young man?" inquired the old beggar, earnestly—"are ye for the north or for the south?"

"Wherefore spier ye, auld man?" replied Archy.

"I hae a cause, an' ane that winna harm ye" said the stranger, "if ye will thole an auld man's company for a little way."

Archy agreed that he should accompany him, and they took the road towards Annan together. It was a calm and glorious morning: the Solway flashed in the sunlight like a silver lake, and not a cloud rested on the brow of the majestic Criffel. For the space of three miles they proceeded in silence, but the old man sighed oft and heavily, as though his spirit were troubled. "Let us rest here for a few minutes," said he, as he sat down on a green knoll by the way-side, and gazing steadfastly in Archy's face—"Young man," he added, "your face brings owre my heart the memories o' thirty years—and, oh! persecuted as the name is—answer me truly if your name be Armstrong?"

"It is!" replied Archy, "and perish the son o' Sandy Armstrong when he disowns it!"

"An' your faither—your mother," continued the old man hesitating as he spoke—"do they—does she live?"

In a few words Archy told of his father's persecution—of his being hunted from the country like a wild beast—of the destruction of the home of his childhood—of his mother's death, and of her burial by his own hands in the wilderness.

'Oh! my poor Elspeth!" cried the aged beggar; "Archy! my son! my son! I am your faither! Sandy Armstrong, the outlaw!"

'My faither!" exclaimed Archy, pressing the beggar to his breast. When they had wept together, "Let us gae

nae farer south," said the old man, "but let us return to Tarras moss, that when the hand o' death comes, ye may lay me down in peace by the side of my Elspeth."

With a sorrowful heart Archy told his father that he was flying from the law and the vengeance of the Scotts. "Gie them gowd as a peace-offering," said the old man, and he pulled from beneath his coarse cloak a leathern purse filled with gold, and placed it in the hands of his son. For nearly twenty years Sandy had served in foreign wars, and obtained honours and rewards; and on visiting his native land, he had assumed the beggar's garb for safety. They returned to Tarras-side together, and a few yellow coins quashed the prosecution of "Fingerless Dick." Archy married the daughter of his former employer, and became a sheep-farmer; and, at the age of fourscore years and ten, the old freebooter closed his eyes in peace in the house of his son, and in the midst of his grandchildren, and was buried, according to his own request, by the side of Elspeth in the wilderness.

THE WIDOW'S AE SON.

We will not name the village where the actors in the following incidents resided; and it is sufficient for our purpose to say, that it lay in the county of Berwick, and within the jurisdiction of the Presbytery of Dunse. Eternity has gathered forty winters into its bosom since the principal events took place. Janet Jeffrey was left a widow before her only child had completed his tenth year. While her husband lay upon his deathbed, he called her to his bedside, and, taking her hand within his, he groaned, gazed on her face, and said—"Now, Janet, I'm gaun a lang an' a dark journey; but ye winna forget, Janet—ye winna forget—for ye ken it has aye been uppermost in my thoughts, and first in my desires, to mak Thamas a minister—promise me that ae thing, Janet, that, if it be His will, ye will see it performed, an' I will die in peace." In sorrow the pledge was given, and in joy performed. Her life became rapt up in her son's life; and it was her morning and her evening prayer that she might live to see her "dear Thamas a shining light in the kirk." Often she declared that he was an "auld farrant bairn, and could ask a blessing like ony minister." Our wishes and affections, however, often blind our judgment. Nobody but the mother thought the son fitted for the kirk, nor the kirk fitted for him. There was always something original, almost poetical, about him—but still Thomas was "no orator as Brutus was." His mother had few means beyond the labour of her hands for their support. She had kept him at the parish school until he was fifteen, and he had learned all that his master knew; and in three years more, by rising early and sitting late at her daily toils, and the savings of his field labour and occasional teaching, she was enabled to make preparation for sending him to Edinburgh. Never did her wheel spin so blithely since her husband was taken from her side, as when she put the first lint upon the rock for his college sarks. Proudly did she shew to her neighbours her double spinel yarn—observing, "It's nae finer than he deserves, poor fallow, for he'll pay me back some day." The web was bleached and the shirts made by her own hands; and the day of his departure arrived. It was a day of joy mingled with anguish. He attended the classes regularly and faithfully; and truly as St Giles' marked the hour, the long, lean figure of Thomas Jeffrey, in a suit of shabby black, and half a dozen volumes under his arm, was seen issuing from his garret in the West Bow—darting down the frail stair with the velocity of a shadow—measuring the Lawn-market and High Street with gigantic strides—gliding like a ghost up the South Bridge, and sailing through the gothic archway of the college, till the punctual student was lost in its inner chambers. Years rolled by, and at length the great the awful day arrived—

"Big with the fate of Thomas and his mother."

He was to preach his trial sermon—and where?—in his own parish—in his native village! It was summer, but his mother rose by daybreak. Her son, however, was at his studies before her; and when she entered his bedroom with a swimming heart, and swimming eyes, Thomas was stalking across the floor, swinging his arms, stamping his feet, and shouting his sermon to the trembling curtains of a four-post bed, which she had purchased in honour of him alone. "Oh, my bairn! my matchless bairn!" cried she, "what a day o' joy is this for your poor mother! But oh, hinny, hae ye it weel aff? I hope there's nae fears o' ye stickin' or using notes?" "Dinna fret, mother—dinna fret," replied the young divine; "stickin' an' notes are out o' the question. I hae every word o' it as clink as the A B C." The appointed hour arrived. She was first at the kirk. Her heart felt too big for her bosom. She could not sit—she walked again to the air—she trembled back—she gazed restless on the pulpit. The parish minister gave out the Psalm—the book shook while she held it. The minister prayed—again gave out a Psalm, and left the pulpit. The book fell from Mrs Jeffrey's hand. A tall figure paced along the passage. He reached the pulpit stairs—took two steps at once. It was a bad omen—but arose from the length of his limbs, not levity. He opened the door—his knees smote one upon another. He sat down—he was paler than death. He rose—his bones were paralytic. The Bible was opened—his mouth opened at the same time, and remained open, but said nothing. His large eyes stared wildly around; at length his teeth chattered, and the text was announced, though half the congregation disputed it. "My brethren!" said he once, and the whiteness of his countenance increased; but he said no more. "My bre—thren!" responded he a second time; his teeth chattered louder; his cheeks became clammy and deathlike. "My brethren!" stammered he a third time, emphatically and his knees fell together. A deep groan echoed from his mother's pew. His wildness increased—"My mother!" exclaimed the preacher. They were the last words he ever uttered in a pulpit. The shaking and the agony began in his heart, and his body caught the contagion. He covered his face with his hands, fell back, and wept. His mother screamed aloud, and fell back also—and thus perished her toils, her husband's prayer, her fond anticipations, and the pulpit oratory of her son. A few neighbours crowded round her to console her, and render her assistance. They led her to the door. She gazed upon them with a look of vacancy—thrice sorrowfully waved her hand, in token that they should leave her; for their words fell upon her heart like dew upon a furnace. Silently she arose and left them, and reaching her cottage, threw herself upon her bed in bitterness. She shed no tears, neither did she groan, but her bosom heaved with burning agony. Sickness smote Thomas to his very heart; yea, even unto blindness he was sick. His tongue was like heated iron in his mouth, and his throat like a parched land. He was led from the pulpit. But he escaped not the persecution of the unfeeling titter, and the expressions of shallow pity. He would have rejoiced to have dwelt in darkness for ever, but there was no escape from the eyes of his tormentors. The congregation stood in groups in the kirkyard, "just," as they said, "to hae anither look at the orator;" and he must pass through the midst of them. With his very soul steeped in shame, and his cheeks covered with confusion, he stepped from the kirk-door. A humming noise issued through the crowd, and every one turned their faces towards him. His misery was greater than he could bear. "Yon was oratory for ye!" said one. "Poor deevil! added another, "I'm sorry for him—but it was as guid as a play." "Was it tragedy or comedy?" inquired a third laughing as he spoke. The remarks fell upon his ear—he

grated his teeth in madness, but he could indure no more; and, covering his face with his hands, he bound off like a wounded deer to his mother's cottage. In despair he entered the house, scarce knowing what he did. He beheld her where she had fallen upon the bed, dead to all but misery. "O mother, mother!" he cried, "dinna ye be angry—dinna ye add to the afflictions of your son! Will ye no, mother?—will ye no?" A low groan was his only answer. He hurried to and fro across the room, wringing his hands. "Mother," he again exclaimed, "will ye no speak ae word? Oh, woman! ye wadna be angry if he kenned what an awfu' thing it is to see a thousan' een below ye and aboon ye, and round about ye, a' staring upon ye like condemning judges, an' looking into your very soul—ye hae nae idea o' it, mother—I tell ye, ye hae nae idea o't, or ye wadna be angry. The very pulpit floor gaed down wi' me—the kirk wa's gaed round about, and I thought the very crown o' my head wad pitch on the top o' the precentor. The very een o' the multitude soomed round me like fishes!—an' oh, woman! are ye dumb? will ye torment me mair? can ye no speak, mother?" But he spoke to one who never spoke again. Her reason departed, and her speech failed, but grief remained. She had lived upon one hope, and that hope was destroyed. Her round ruddy cheeks and portly form wasted away, and within a few weeks, the neighbours who performed the last office of humanity, declared that a thinner corpse was never wrapt in a winding sheet than Mrs. Jeffrey. Time soothed, but did not heal the sorrows, the shame, and the disappointment of the son. He sank into a village teacher, and often in the midst of his little school, he would quote his first, his only text—imagine the children to be his congregation—attempt to proceed—gaze wildly round for a moment, and sit down and weep. Through these aberrations his school dwindled into nothingness—and poverty increased his delirium. Once, in the midst of the remaining few, he gave forth the fatal text. "My brethren!" he exclaimed, and smitting his hand upon his forehead, cried, "Speak, mother!—speak now!" and fell with his face upon the floor. The children rushed screaming from the school, and, when the villagers entered, the troubled spirit had fled for ever.

AN OLD TAR'S YARN.

Some years ago, half a dozen friends and myself visted Greenwich Hospital. Our conductor was a weather-beaten middle-aged tar, whose larboard glim had been douced since boyhood with the small-pox, and his starboard fin was carried away by a chain shot. By the gold lace which he sported on his chapeau, the sleeves of his coat, &c., he appeared to hold the rank of boatswain in the college. He was a communicative old boy; and we felt indebted to his civilities. He, however, spurned the idea of being rewarded with money. "No, blow it!" he exclaimed, "not a tissey, not a single brown—but a drop of grog, gemmem, if you please." So saying, he led the way to a neighbouring tavern, and entrenched himself in a corner of the parlour, with which he seemed intimately familiar. I placed myself at his elbow with the intention of drawing from him some favourite yarn. During the first glass he spoke only of the hospital; during the second, he advanced to actions and bombardments; but, as he finished the third, as if to induce us to call for a fourth, he said, "But it's of no use talking about battles and them sort of things; gemmem, by your leave, I'll tell you a bit of a story—it's a story that has made many a brave fellow waste his salt water; and, by the way, I may say it's about a countryman of your own, too—for Tom Beaumont was born in Newcastle, and he was a boy, man, mate, and master of a Shields collier, many a long day During our last scuffle with the Yankees, I was master-gunner of as handsome a gun-brig as ever did credit to a dock-yard, or dipped a keel in the water. Love ye, it would have done your eyes good to have seen her skimming before the wind, and breasting the billows as gently as a boy's first kiss, which only touches the cheek, and that's all. Then we carried fourteen as pretty guns as ever drove a bullet through a Frenchman's timbers. Old Tom Beaumont—(God bless him!)—was our commander, and a better soul never cracked a biscuit. He was a hardy seaman to the backbone, an upright and down-straight fear-nothing; but the kindest-hearted fellow in the world, for all that. Well, gemmem, as I'm saying—Tom (we always called him Tom, because we loved him) married young, and, for two years he was the happiest dog alive. He had a wife as pretty as an angel, and as good as himself; and a little rogue their son—the very picture of his own face in a button—who was beginning to climb upon his knee and pull his whiskers. Man alive couldn't desire more—the very scene might make a Dutchman dance, or a Russian happy. After two years fair wind and weather, however, in all mortal reckoning it was reasonable to expect squalls. Beaumont had not then joined the navy in a regular way; and at that period he found it necessary to proceed to America, where he had entered into extensive mercantile speculations. Finding that he should be compelled to remain there much longer than he dreamed of, he sent for his wife and child. They sailed—but it proved a last voyage to a new world. However, gemmen, it's a voyage we must all take, from the admiral down to the cabin-boy—that's one comfort; and may we, by the aid of a good chart, steer clear of the enemy's lee-shore and brimstone shoals! Poor Tom's inquiries were fruitless; no one ever heard of the vessel, and no one ever doubted that all hands were as low as Davy Jones. It was like a shot between wind and water to Beaumont; but he bore up after a way, though it had shivered his mainsheet. Well, as I was saying, it was during our last scuffle with the Yankees, more than twenty years after Tom had lost his wife and child—we were returning with the little brig from the West Indies, when I was roused in my hammock by a bustle upon deck, and the cry of 'A Yankee!' I sprang up at the glorious news, and through the clear moonlight perceived an impudent-looking lubber bearing upon us full sail, and displaying American colours. 'Haul to, my lads!' cried old Beaumont; 'let them smell powder for breakfast.' Small time was lost in obeying the order; for we were always in readiness for welcome company. Twice they attempted to board us, but were driven back for their kindness with some score of broken heads, and the loss of some hundred American fingers. After two hours' hard peppering, Beaumont, seizing a lucky moment, ordered us to throw in a broadside. Every shot told; the Yankee began to stagger, and in a few minutes gave evidence that her swimming days were ended. 'Vast firing!' cried Beaumont; 'let us save a brave enemy. He repeated the word enemy; and I heard him mutter, 'flesh of our own flesh.' The vessel was riddled like the lid of a pepper-box, and sank so rapidly that we were able to save only thirty of her crew. Their captain was among the number, and a gallant-looking youth he was; but, in their last attempt to board us, Beaumont had wounded him on the shoulder with his cutlass. The blood ran down his arm, and poured from his fingers; yet the brave soul never whispered it, nor made a wry face upon the matter, but stood and saw his countrymen attended to. Nature, however, gave way, and he fell upon the deck. Beaumont eagerly raised him in his arms, and conveyed him to his own bed. On examining his wound, the surgeon took the portrait of a beautiful lady from his breast, and handed it to the commander. Poor old Tom gazed upon it for a moment—he started—he uttered a sudden scream—I thought he had gone mad. 'Do you remember that face?' he exclaimed. How could I forget it!—to have seen it once was to remember it a hundred

years—it was his wife's! I won't tire you with a long story," continued the narrator, "for it's all true, and no yarn. For several days the gallant young American lay delirious, as the doctor called it. But—I can't describe it to you, gemmen—had you seen poor old Tom, during all the time! No, hang me, I can't describe it! The youth also wore upon his finger a diamond ring, upon which were inscribed the names of Beaumont and his long-lost Eleanor. Flesh and blood could not stand the sight—there was the old man keeping watch by the bedside, night and day, weeping like a child, pacing the cabin floor, beating his breast—and sometimes snatching the hand of the poor sufferer to his lips, and calling him his murdered son, and himself the murderer. Then, he would doubt again, and doubt made him worse. At length the doctor declared the invalid out of danger, and said the commander might put to him any question he pleased. I wish I could tell you this scene; but I can't. However, there sat the full, bursting-hearted old boy, the big tears pouring down his cheeks, with the hand of the young American in his; and, sobbing like a child, he inquired, 'Were you born an American?' The youth trembled—his heart filled, and he wept, just like old Tom. 'Alas!' said he, 'I know not; I have been educated an American. I only know that I was saved by the good old man who adopted me as his son, and who found me almost lifeless, in the arms of a dying woman, on the raft of a deserted wreck, which the winds had driven on shore. My unfortunate mother could only recommend me to his care, and died.' The very heart and soul of the old tar wept. 'And this portrait, and this ring?' he exclaimed, breathless, and shaking like a yacht in a hurricane. 'The portrait,' replied the youth, 'was a part of what my mother had saved from the wreck, and, as I was told by my foster-father, is a likeness of herself. The ring was taken from her finger, and from the engraving upon it, I have borne the name of Beaumont.' 'My son!—my own Tom!—child of my Eleanor!' cried the happy old father, hugging him to his breast. Gemmen, you can imagine the rest," said our one-armed companion; and, raising the fourth glass to his lips, he added, "and by your permission here's a health to old Tom Beaumont, and his son, Heaven bless them!"

THE DEATH OF THE CHEVALIER DE LA BEAUTE.

It was near midnight, on the 12th of October, 1516, when a horseman, spurring his jaded steed, rode furiously down the path leading to the strong tower of Wedderburn. He alighted at the gate, and knocked loudly for admission.

"What would ye?" inquired the warder from the turret.

"Conduct me to your chief," was the laconic reply of the breathless messenger.

"Is your message so urgent that ye must deliver it to-night?" continued the warder, who feared to kindle the fiery temper of his master, by disturbing him with a trifling errand.

"Urgent!—babbler!" replied the other, impatiently—"to-day the best blood of the Homes has been lapped by dogs upon the street; and I have seen it."

The warder aroused the domestics in the tower, and the stranger entered. He was conducted into a long, gloomy apartment, dimly lighted by a solitary lamp. Around him hung rude portraits of the chiefs of Wedderburn, and on the walls were suspended their arms and the spoils of their victories. The solitary apartment seemed like the tomb of war. Every weapon around him had been rusted with the blood of Scotland's enemies. It was a fitting theatre for the recital of a tale of death. He had gazed around for a few minutes, when heavy footsteps were heard treading along the dreary passages, and the next moment Sir David Home entered—armed as for the field.

"Your errand, stranger?" said the young chief of Wedderburn, fixing a searching glance upon him as he spoke.

The stranger bowed, and replied—"The Regent"——

"Ay!" interrupted Home, "the enemy of our house—the creature of our hands, whom we lifted from exile to sovereignty, and who now with his minions tracks our path like a blood-hound!—what of this gracious Regent? Are ye too one of his myrmidons, and seek ye to strike the lion in his den?"

"Nay," answered the other; "but from childhood the faithful retainer of your murdered kinsman."

"My murdered kinsman!" exclaimed Wedderburn, grasping the arm of the other, "what!—more blood!—more!—What mean ye, stranger?"

"That, to gratify the revenge of the Regent Albany," replied the other, "my lord Home and your kinsman William have been betrayed and murdered. Calumny has blasted their honour. Twelve hours ago I beheld their heads tossed like footballs by the foot of the common executioner, and afterwards fixed over the porch of the Nether Bow, for the execration and indignities of the slaves of Albany. All day the blood of the Homes has dropped upon the pavement, where the mechanic and the clown pass over and tread on it."

"Hold!" cried Home, and the dreary hall echoed with his voice. "No more!" he continued; and he paced hurriedly for a few minutes across the apartment, casting a rapid glance upon the portraits of his ancestors. "By heavens! they chide me," he exclaimed, "that my sword sleeps in the scabbard, while the enemies of the house of Home triumph." He drew his sword, and approaching the picture of his father, he pressed the weapon to his lips, and continued—"By the soul of my ancestors, I swear upon this blade, that the proud Albany and his creatures shall feel that one Home still lives!" He dashed the weapon back into its sheath, and approaching the stranger, drew him towards the lamp, and said—"Ye are Trotter, who was my cousin's henchman, are ye not?"

"The same," replied the messenger.

"And ye come to rouse me to revenge," added Sir David; "ye shall have it, man—revenge that shall make the Regent weep—revenge that the four corners of the earth shall hear of, and history record. Ye come to remind me that my father and my brother fell on the field of Flodden, in defence of a foolish king and that I, too, bled there—that there also lie the bones of my kinsman, Cuthbert of Fastcastle, of my brother Cockburn and his son, and the father and brother of my Alison. Ye come to remind me of this; and that, as a reward for the shedding of our blood, the head of the chief of our house has been fixed upon the gate of Edinburgh as food for the carrion crow and the night owl. Go, get thee refreshment, Trotter; then go to rest, and dream of other heads exalted, as your late master's is, and I will be the interpreter of your visions."

Trotter bowed and withdrew, and Lady Alison entered the apartment.

"Ye are agitated, husband," said the gentle lady, laying her hand upon his—"hath the man brought evil tidings?"

"Can good tidings come to a Home," answered Sir David, "while the tyrant Albany rides rough-shod over the nobility of Scotland, and, like a viper, stings the bosom that nursed him? Away to thy chamber, Alison—leave me—it is no tale for woman's ears."

"Nay, if you love me, tell me," she replied, laying her hand upon his brow, "for since your return from the field of Flodden, I have not seen you look thus."

"This is no time to talk of love, Aley," added he; "but come—leave me, silly one—it concerns not thee; no evil hath overtaken the house of Blackadder, but the Homes have become a mark for the arrows of desolation, and their necks a footstool for tyrants. Away, Alison—to-night I can think of but one word, and that is—vengeance!"

Lady Alison wept and withdrew in silence; and Wedderburn paced the floor of the gloomy hall, meditating in what manner he should most effectually resent the death of his kinsman.

It was only a few weeks after the execution of the Earl of Home and his brother, that the Regent Albany offered an additional insult to his family by appointing Sir Anthony D'Arcy warden of the east marches—an office which the Homes had held for ages. D'Arcy was a Frenchman, and the favourite of the Regent; and, on account of the comeliness of his person, obtained the appellation of the *Sieur de la Beauté*. The indignation of Wedderburn had not slumbered, and the conferring the honours and the power that had hitherto been held by his family upon a foreigner, incensed him to almost madness. For a time, however, no opportunity offered of causing his resentment to be felt; for, D'Arcy was as much admired for the discretion and justice of his government as for the beauty of his person. To his care the Regent had committed young Cockburn. the heir of Langton, who was the nephew of Wedderburn. This the Homes felt as a new indignity, and, together with the Cockburns, they forcibly ejected from Langton castle the tutors whom D'Arcy had placed over their kinsman. The tidings of this event were brought to the Chevalier while he was holding a court at Kelso, and immediately summoning together his French retainers and a body of yeomen, he proceeded with a gay and a gallant company by way of Fogo to Langton. His troop drew up in front of the castle, and their gay plumes and burnished trappings glittered in the sun. The proud steed of the Frenchman was covered with a panoply of gold and silver, and he himself was decorated as for a bridal. He rode haughtily to the gate, and demanded the inmates of the castle to surrender.

"Surrender! boasting Gaul!" replied William Cockburn, the uncle of the young laird; "that is a word the men of Merse have yet to learn. But yonder comes my brother Wedderburn—speak it to him."

D'Arcy turned round, and beheld Sir David Home and a party of horsemen bearing down upon them at full speed. The Chevalier drew back, and waiting their approach, placed himself at the head of his company.

"By the mass! Sir Warden," said Sir David, riding up to D'Arcy, "and ye have brought a goodly company to visit my nephew. Come ye in peace, or what may be your errand?"

"I wish peace," replied the Chevalier, "and come to enforce the establishment of my rights—why do ye interfere between me and my ward?"

"Does a Frenchman talk of his rights upon the lands of Home?" returned Sir David, "or by whose authority is my nephew your ward?"

"By the authority of the Regent, rebel Scot!" retorted D'Arcy.

"By the authority of the Regent!" interrupted Wedderburn—"dare ye, foreign minion, speak of the authority of the murderer of the Earl of Home, while within the reach of the sword of his kinsman?"

"Ay! and in his teeth dare tell him," replied the Chevalier "that the Home now before me is not less a traitor than he who proved false to his sovereign on the field of Flodden, who conspired against the Regent, and whose head now adorns the port of Edinburgh."

"Wretch!" exclaimed the henchman Trotter, dashing forward, and raising his sword, "said ye that my master proved false at Flodden?"

"Hold!" exclaimed Wedderburn, grasping his arm—"Gramercy! ye uncivilised dog! for the sake of your master's head would ye lift your hand against that face which ladies die to look upon. Pardon me, most beautiful Chevalier! the salutation of my servant may be too rough for your French palate, but you and your master treated my kinsman somewhat more roughly. What say ye. Sir Warden, do ye depart in peace, or wish ye that we should try the temper of our Border steel upon your French bucklers?"

"Depart ye in peace, vain boaster," replied D'Arcy, "lest a worse thing befall you."

"Then on, my merry men!" cried Wedderburn, "and to-day the head of the Regent's favourite—the Chevalier of Beauty—for the head of the Earl of Home!"

"The house of Home and revenge!" shouted his followers, and rushed upon the armed band of D'Arcy. At first the numbers were nearly equal, and the contest was terrible. Each man fought hand to hand, and the ground was contested inch by inch. The gilded ornaments of the French horses were covered with blood, and their movements were encumbered by their weight. The sword of Wedderburn had already smitten three of the Chevalier's followers to the ground, and the two chiefs now contended in single combat. D'Arcy fought with the fury of despair, but Home continued to bear upon him as a tiger that has been robbed of its cubs. Every moment the force of the Chevalier was thinned, and every instant the number of his enemies increased, as the neighbouring peasantry rallied round the standard of their chief. Finding the most faithful of his followers stretched upon the earth, D'Arcy sought safety in flight. Dashing his silver spurs into the sides of his noble steed, he turned his back upon his desperate enemy, and rushed along in the direction of Pouterleiny, and through Dunse, with the hope of gaining the road to Dunbar, of which town he was governor. Fiercely, Wedderburn followed at his heels, with his naked sword uplifted, and ready to strike; immediately behind him, rode Trotter, the henchman of the late Earl, and another of Home's followers named Dickson. It was a fearful sight as they rushed through Dunse, their horses striking fire from their heels in the light of the very sunbeams; and the sword of the pursuer within a few feet of the fugitive. Still, the Chevalier rode furiously, urging on the gallant animal that bore him, which seemed conscious that the life of its rider depended upon its speed. His flaxen locks waved behind him in the wind. and the voice of his pursuers ever and anon fell upon his ear, like a dagger of death thrust into his bosom. The horse upon which Wedderburn rode, had been wounded in the conflict, and, as they drew near Broomhouse, its speed slackened, and his followers. Trotter and Dickson, took the lead in the pursuit. The Chevalier had reached a spot on the right bank of the Whitadder, which is now in a field of the farm of Swallowdean, when his noble steed, becoming entangled with its cumbrous trappings, stumbled, and hurled its rider to the earth. The next moment, the swords of Trotter and Dickson, were transfixed in the body of the unfortunate Chevalier.

"Off with his head!" exclaimed Wedderburn, who at the same instant reached the spot. The bloody mandate was readily obeyed; and Home, taking the bleeding head in his hand, cut off the flaxen tresses, and tied them as a trophy to his saddle-bow. The body of the *Chevalier de la Beauté* was rudely buried on the spot where he fell. An humble stone marks out the scene of the tragedy, and the people in the neighbourhood yet call it—"*Banty's grave.*" The head of the Chevalier was carried to Dunse, where it was fixed upon a spear, at the cross, and Wedderburn exclaimed —"Thus be exalted the enemies of the house of Home!

The bloody relic was then borne in triumph to Home castle, and placed upon the battlements. "There," said Sir David, "let the Regent climb when he returns from France for the head of his favourite—it is thus that Home of Wedderburn revenges the murder of his kindred."

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE PROCRASTINATOR.

Being overtaken by a shower in Kensington Gardens, I sought shelter in one of the alcoves near the palace. I was scarce seated, when the storm burst with all its fury; and I observed an old fellow, who had stood loitering till the hurricane whistled round his ears, making towards me as rapidly as his apparently palsied limbs would permit. Upon his nearer approach, he appeared rather to have suffered from infirmity than years. He wore a brownish-black coat, or rather shell, which, from its dimensions, had never been intended for the wearer; and his inexpressibles were truly inexpressible. "So," said I, as he seated himself on the bench, and shook the rain from his old broad-brimmed hat, "you see, old boy, '*Procrastination is the thief of time;*' the clouds gave you a hint of what was coming, but you seemed not to take it." "It is," replied he, eagerly. "Doctor Young is in the right. Procrastination has been my curse since I was in leading-strings. It has grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. It has ever been my besetting sin—my companion in prosperity and adversity; and I have slept upon it, like Samson on the lap of Delilah, till it has shorn my locks and deprived me of my strength. It has been to me a witch, a manslayer, and a murderer; and when I would have shaken it off in wrath and in disgust, I found I was no longer master of my own actions and my own house. It had brought around me a host of its blood-relations—its sisters and its cousins-german—to fatten on my weakness, and haunt me to the grave; so that when I tore myself from the embrace of one, it was only to be intercepted by another. You are young, Sir, and a stranger to me, but its effects upon me, and my history—the history of a poor paralytic shoemaker—if you have patience to hear, may serve as a beacon to you in your voyage through life."

Upon expressing my assent to his proposal—for the fluency and fervency of his manner had at once rivetted my attention, and excited curiosity—he continued:—

"I was born without a fortune, as many people are. When about five years of age, I was sent to a parish school in Roxburghshire, and procrastination went with me. Being possessed of a tolerable memory, I was not more deficient than my schoolfellows; but the task which they had studied the previous evening, was by me seldom looked at till the following morning; and my seat was the last to be occupied of any other on the form. My lessons were committed to memory by a few hurried glances, and repeated with a faltering rapidity, which not unfrequently puzzled the ear of the teacher to follow me. But what was thus hastily learned, was as suddenly forgotten. They were mere surface impressions, each obliterated by the succeeding. And though I had run over a tolerable general education, I left school but little wiser than when I entered it.

"My parents—peace to their memory!"—here the old fellow looked most feelingly, and a tear of filial recollection glistened in his eyes; it added a dignity to the recital of his weakness, and I almost reverenced him—"My parents," continued he, "had no ambition to see me rise higher in society than an honest tradesman; and, at thir een, I was bound apprentice to a shoemaker. Yes, Sir, I was—I am a shoemaker; and but for my curse—my malady—had been an ornament to my profession. I have measured the foot of a princess, Sir; I have made slippers to his Majesty!' Here his tongue acquired new vigour from the idea of his own importance. "Yes, Sir, I have made slippers to his Majesty—yet I am an unlucky—I am a bewitched—I am a ruined man. But to proceed with my history. During the first year of my apprenticeship I acted in the capacity of errand-boy; and, as such, had to run upon many an unpleasant message—sometimes to ask money frequently to borrow it. Now, Sir, I am also a *bashful* man, and, as I was saying, *Bashfulness* is one of the blood-relations which procrastination has fastened upon me. While acting in my last-mentioned capacity, I have gone to the house—gazed at every window—passed it and repassed it—placed my hand upon the rapper—withdrawn it—passed it and repassed it again—stood hesitating and consulting with myself—then resolved to defer it to the next day, and finally returned to my master, not with a direct lie, but a broad *equivocation;* and this was another of the cousins-german which procrastination introduced to my acquaintance.

"In the third year of my servitude, I became fond of reading; was esteemed a quick workman; and, having no desire for money beyond what was necessary to supply my wants, I gave unrestricted indulgence to my new passion. We had each an allotted quantity of work to perform weekly. Conscious of being able to complete it in half the time, and having yielded myself solely to my ruinous propensity to delay, I seldom did anything before the Thursday; and the remaining days were spent in hurry, bustle, and confusion. Occasionally I overrated my abilities—my task was unfinished, and I was compelled to count a *dead horse.* Week after week this grew upon me, till I was so firmly saddled, that, until the expiration of my apprenticeship, I was never completely freed from it. This was another of my curse's handmaidens."

Here he turned to me with a look of seriousness, and said—"Beware, young man, how you trust to your own strength and your own talents; for, however noble it may be to do so, let it be in the open field, before you are driven into a corner, where your arms may come in contact with the thorns and the angles of the hedges.

"About this time, too, I fell in love—yes, *fell* in love—for I just beheld the fair object, and I was a dead man, or a new man, or anything you will. Frequently as I have looked and acted like a fool, I believe I never did so so strikingly as at that moment. She was a beautiful girl—a very angel of light—about five feet three inches high, and my own age. Heaven knows how I ever had courage to declare my passion; for I put it off day after day, and week after week, always preparing a new speech against the next time of meeting her, until three or four rivals stepped forward before me. At length, I did speak, and never was love more clumsily declared. I told her in three words; then looked to the ground, and again in her face most pitifully. She received my addresses just as saucily as a pretty girl could do. But it were useless to go over our courtship—it was the only happy period of my existence, and every succeeding day has been misery. Matters were eventually brought to a bearing, and the fatal day of final felicity appointed. I was yet young, and my love possessed all the madness of a first passion. She not only occupied my heart, but my whole thoughts; I could think of nothing else—speak of nothing else—and, what was worse, do nothing else;

it burned up the very capabilities of action, and rendered my native indolence yet more indolent. However, the day came; (and a bitter stormy day it was;) the ceremony was concluded; and the honey-moon seemed to pass away in a fortnight.

"About twelve months after our marriage, Heaven (as authors say) blest our loves with a son and—I had almost said heir. Deplorable patrimony!—heir of his mother's features—the sacrifice of his father's weakness." Kean could not have touched this last burst. The father—the miserable man—parental affection—agony—remorse—repentance—were expressed in a moment.

A tear was hurrying down his withered cheek as he dashed it away with his dripping sleeve. "I am a weak old fool," said he, endeavouring to smile; for there was a volatile gaiety in his disposition, which his sorrows had subdued, but not extinguished. "Yet my boy! my poor dear Willie!—I shall never—no, I shall never see him again!" Here he again wept; and had nature not denied me that luxury, I should have wept too, for the sake of company. After a pause, he again proceeded:—

"After the birth of my child, came the baptism. I had no conscientious objection to the tenets of the established church of my country; but I belonged to no religious community. I had never thought of it as an obligation beyond that of custom; and deferred it from year to year till I felt ashamed to 'go forward' on account of my age. My wife was a Cameronian; and to them, though I knew nothing of their principles, I had an aversion; but for her to hold up the child, while I was in the place, was worse than heathenism—was unheard of in the parish. The nearest Episcopal chapel was at Kelso, a distance of ten miles. The child still remained unbaptized. 'It hasna a name yet,' said the ignorant meddlers, who had no higher idea of the ordinance. It was a source of much uneasiness to my wife, and gave rise to some family quarrelling. Months succeeded weeks, and eventually the child was carried to the Episcopal church. This choked up all the slander of the town, and directed it into one channel upon my devoted head. Some said I 'wasna sound,' and all agreed I 'was nae better than I should be;' while the zealous clergyman came to my father, expressing his fears that 'his son was in a bad way.' For this, too, am I indebted to procrastination. I thus became a martyr to supposed opinions, of which I was ignorant; and such was the unchristian bigotry of my neighbours, that, deeming it sinful to employ one whom they considered little other than a pagan, about five years after my marriage, I was compelled to remove with my family to London.

"We were at this period what tradesmen term *miserably hard up*. Having sold off our little stock of furniture, after discharging a few debts which were unavoidably contracted, a balance of rather less than two pounds remained; and upon this, my wife, my child, and myself, were to travel a distance of three hundred and fifty miles. I will not go over the journey; we performed it on foot in twenty days; and, including lodging, our daily expense amounted to one shilling and eightpence; so that, on entering the metropolis, all we possessed was five shillings and a few pence. It was the dead of winter, and nearly dark, when we were passing down St John Street, Clerkenwell. I was benumbed—my wife was fainting—and our poor child was blue and speechless. We entered a public-house near Smithfield, where two pints of warm porter and ginger, with a crust of bread and cheese, operated as partial restoratives. The noisy scene of butchers, drovers, and coal-heavers, was new to me. My child was afraid, my wife uncomfortable, and I, a gaping observer, forgetful of my own situation. My boy pulled my coat, and said, 'Come, father'—my wife jogged my elbow, and reminded me of a lodging; but my old reply, '*Stop a little*,' was my ninety and nine times repeated answer. Frequently the landlord made a long neck over the table, gauging the contents of our tardily emptied pint; and, as the watchman was calling 'Past eleven,' finally took it away, and bade us 'bundle off.' Now I arose, feeling at once the pride of my spirit and the poorness of my purse—vowing never to darken his door again, should I remain in London a hundred years.

"On reaching the street, I inquired at a half-grown boy where we might obtain a lodging; and, after causing me to inquire twice or thrice—'I no ken, Sawney—haud awa' north,' said the brat, sarcastically imitating my accent. I next inquired of a watchman, who said there was no place upon his beat—but *beat* was Gaelic to me; and I repeated my inquiry to another, who directed me towards the hells of Saffron-hill. At a third, I requested to be informed the way, who, after abusing me for seeking lodgings at such an hour, said he had seen me in the town six hours before, and bade us go to the devil. A fourth inquired if we had any money—took us to the bar of a public-house—called for a quartern of gin—drank our healths—asked if we could obtain a bed—which being answered in the negative, he hurried to the door, bawling 'Half-past eleven,' and left me to pay for the liquor. On reaching Saffron-hill, it was in an Irish uproar; policemen, thieves, prostitutes, and Israelites, were brawling in a satanic mass of iniquity; blood and murder was the order of the night. My child screamed; my wife clung to my arm; she would not, she durst not, sleep in such a place. To be brief: we had to wander in the streets till the morning; and I believe that night, aided by a broken heart, was the forerunner of her death. It was the first time I had been compelled to walk trembling for a night without shelter, or to sit frozen on a threshold; and this, too, I owe to procrastination.

"For a time we rented a miserable garret, without furniture or fixture, at a shilling weekly, which was paid in advance. I had delayed making application for employment till our last sixpence was spent. We had passed a day without food; my child appeared dying; my wife said nothing, but she gazed upon her dear boy, and shook her head with an expression that wrung me to the soul. I rushed out almost in madness, and, in a state of unconsciousness, hurried from shop to shop in agitation and in misery. It was vain—appearances were against me. I was broken down and dejected, and my state of mind and manner appeared a compound of the maniac and the blackguard. At night I was compelled to return to the suffering victims of my propensity, penniless and unsuccessful. It was a dreadful and a sleepless night with us all; or, if I did slumber upon the hard floor for a moment, (for we had neither seat nor covering,) it was to startle at the cries of my child wailing for hunger, or the smothered sighs of my unhappy partner. Again and again I almost thought them the voice of the Judge, saying, 'Depart from me, ye cursed.'

"I again hurried out with daybreak, for I was wretched, and resumed my inquiries; but night came, and I again returned equally successful. The yearnings of my child were now terrible, and the streaming eyes of his fond mother as she pressed his head with her cold hand upon her lap, alone distinguished her from death. The pains of hunger in myself were becoming insupportable; my teeth gnashed against each other, and worms seemed gnawing my heart-strings. At this moment, my dear wife looked me in the face, and, stretching her hand to me, said, 'Farewell, my love—in a few hours I and our dear child shall be at rest! Oh! hunger, hunger!' I could stand no more. Reason forsook me. I could have died for them; but I could not beg. We had nothing to pledge. Our united wearing apparel would not have brought a shilling. My wife had a pair of pocket Bibles; (I had once given them in a present;) my eyes fell upon them—I snatched them up unobserved—rushed from the house and—O Heaven! let the cause forgive the

act—pawned them for eighteenpence. It saved our lives. it obtained employment, and, for a few weeks, appeared to have overcome my curse.

"I am afraid I grow tedious with particulars, Sir; it is an old man's fault—though I am not old either; I am scarce fifty-five. After being three years in London, I was appointed foreman of an extensive establishment in the Strand. I remained in this situation about four years. It was one of respectability and trust; demanding, hourly, a vigilant and undivided attention. To another, it might have been attended with honour and profit; but, to me, it terminated in disgrace. Amongst other duties, I had the payment of the journeymen, and the giving out of the work. They being numerous, and their demands frequent, it would have required a clerk for the proper discharge of that duty alone. I delayed entering at the moment in my books the materials and cash given to each, until they multiplying upon my hands, and begetting a consequent confusion, it became impossible for me to make their entry with certainty or correctness. The workmen were not slow in discovering this, and not a few of the more profligate improved upon it to their advantage. Thus, I frequently found it impossible to make both ends of my account meet; and, in repeated instances, where the week's expenditure exceeded the general average, though satisfied in my own mind of its accuracy, from my inability to state the particulars, in order to conceal my infirmity, I have accounted for the overplus from my own pocket. Matters went on in this way for a considerable time. You will admit I was rendered feelingly sensible of my error, and I resolved to correct it. But my resolutions were always made of paper; they were like a complaisant debtor—full of promises, praying for grace, and dexterously evading performance. Thus, day after day, I deferred the adaption of my new system to a future period. For, Sir, you must be aware there is a pleasure in procrastination, of a nature the most alluring and destructive; but it is a pleasure purchased by the sacrifice of judgment; in its nature and results it resembles the happiness of the drunkard; for, in exact ratio as our spirits are raised above their proper level, in the same proportion, when the ardent effects have evaporated, they sink beneath that level.

"I was now too proud to work as a mere journeyman, and I commenced business for myself; but I began without capital, and a gourd of sorrow hung over me, while I stood upon sand. I had some credit; but, as my bills became payable, I ever found I had put off, till the very day they became due, the means of liquidating them; then had I to run and borrow five pounds from one, and five shillings from another, urged by despair, from a hundred quarters. My creditors grew clamorous—my wife upbraided me—I flew to the bottle—to the bottle!" he repeated; "and my ruin was complete—my family, business, everything, was neglected. Bills of Middlesex were served on me, declarations filed—I surrendered myself, and was locked up in Whitecross Street. It is a horrid place—the Fleet is a palace to it—the Bench, paradise! But, Sir, I will draw my painful story to a close. During my imprisonment, my wife died—died, not by my hands, but from the work of them! She was laid in a strange grave, and strangers laid her head in the dust, while I lay a prisoner in the city where she was buried. My boy—my poor Willie—who had been always neglected, was left without father and without mother!—Sir! Sir! my boy was left without food! He forsook visiting me in the prison—I heard he had turned the associate of thieves; and, from that period, five years have passed, and I have obtained no trace of him. But it is my doing—my poor Willie!"

Here the victim of procrastination finished his narrative. The storm had passed away, and the sun again shone out. The man had interested me, and we left the gardens together. I mentioned that I had to go into the city; he said he had business there also, and asked to accompany me. I could not refuse him. From the door by which we left the gardens our route lay by way of Oxford Street. As we proceeded down Holborn, the church bell of St Sepulchre's began to toll; and the crowd, collected round the top of Newgate Street, indicated an execution. As we approached the place, the criminal was brought forth. He was a young man about nineteen years of age, and had been found guilty of an aggravated case of housebreaking. As the unhappy being turned round to look upon the spectators, my companion gave a convulsive shriek, and, springing from my side exclaimed—"Righteous Heaven! my Willie! my murdered Willie!"—He had proceeded but a few paces, when he fell with his face upon the ground. In the wretched criminal he discovered his lost, his only son. The miserable old man was conveyed, in a state of insensibility, to St Bartholomew's Hospital, where I visited him the next day; he seemed to suffer much, and, in a few hours, he died with a shudder, and the word *Procrastination* on his tongue.

UPS AND DOWNS;

OR,

DAVID STUART'S ACCOUNT OF HIS PILGRIMAGE.

Old David Stuart was the picture of health—a personification of contentment. When I knew him, his years must have considerably exceeded threescore; but his good-natured face was as ruddy as health could make it; his hair, though mingled with grey, was as thick and strong as if he had been but twenty; his person was still muscular and active; and, moreover, he yet retained, in all their freshness, the feelings of his youth, and no small portion of the simplicity of his childhood. I loved David, not only because he was a good man, but because there was a great deal of *character* or *originality* about him; and, though his brow was cheerful, the clouds of sorrow had frequently rested upon it. More than once, when seated by his parlour fire, and when he had finished his pipe, and his afternoon tumbler stood on the table beside him, I have heard him give the following account of the ups and downs—the trials, the joys, and sorrows—which he had encountered in his worldly pilgrimage; and, to preserve the interest of the history, I shall give it in David's own idiom, and in his own words.

"I ne'er was a great traveller," David was wont to begin: "through the length o' Edinburgh, and as far south as Newcastle, is a' that my legs ken about geography. But I've had a good deal o' crooks and thraws, and ups and downs, in the world, for a' that. My faither was in the droving line, and lived in the parish o' Coldstream. He did a good deal o' business, baith about the fairs on the Borders, at Edinburgh market every week, and sometimes at Morpeth. He was a bachelor till he was five-and-forty, and he had a very decent lass keep'd his house, they ca'd Kirsty Simson. Kirsty was a remarkably weel-faur'd woman, and a number o' the farm lads round about used to come and see her, as weel as trades' chields frae about Coldstream and Birgham—no that she gied them ony encouragement, but that it was her misfortune to hae a gude-looking face. So, there was ae night that my faither cam' hame frae Edinburgh, and, according to his custom, he had a drap in his e'e—yet no sae meikle but that he could see a lad or twa hingin' about the house. He was very angry; and, 'Kirsty,' said he, 'I dinna like thae youngsters to come about the house.'

"'I'm sure, Sir,' said she, 'I dinna encourage them.'

"'Weel, Kirsty,' said he, 'if that's the way, if ye hae nae objections, I'll marry ye mysel'.'

"'I dinna see what objections I should hae,' said she, and, without ony mair courtship, in a week or twa they were married; and, in course o' time, I was born. I was sent to school when I was about eight years auld, but my education

ne'er got far'er than the Rule o' Three. Before I was fifteen, I assisted my faither at the markets, and, in a short time, he could trust me to buy and sell. There was one very dark night in the month o' January, when I was little mair than seventeen, my faither and me were gaun to Morpeth, and we were wishing to get forward wi' the beasts as far as Whittingham; but just as we were about half a mile doun the loanin' frae Glanton, it cam' awa ane o' the dreadfu'est storms that e'er mortal was out in. The snaw, literally, fell in a solid mass, and every now and then the wind cam' roarin' and howlin' frae the hills, and the fury o' the drift was terrible. I was driven stupid and half suffocated. My faither was on a strong mare, and I was on a bit powney, and amang the cattle there was a camstairy three-year-auld bull, that wad neither hup nor drive. We had it tied by the fore leg and the horns; but, the moment the drift broke ower us, the creature grew perfectly unmanageable; forward it wadna gang. My faither had strucken at it, when the mad animal plunged its horns into the side o' the mare, and he fell to the ground. I could just see what had happened, and that was a'. I jumped aff the powney, and ran forward. 'O faither!' says I, 'ye're no hurt, are ye?' He was trying to rise, but before I could reach him —indeed, before I had the words weel out o' my mouth— the animal made a drive at him! 'O Davy!' he cried, and he ne'er spak mair! We generally carried pistols, and I had presence o' mind to draw ane out o' the breast-pocket o' my big coat, and shoot the animal dead on the spot. I tried to raise my faither in my arms, and dark as it was, I could see his blood upon the snaw—and a dreadfu' sight it was for a son to see! I couldna see where he had been hurt; and still, though he groaned but once, I didna think he was dead, and I strove and strove again to lift him upon the back o' the powney, and take him back to Glanton; but, though I fought wi' my heart like to burst a' the time, I couldna accomplish it. 'Oh, what shall I do?' said I, and cried and shouted for help—for the snaw fell sae fast, and the drift was sae terrible, that I was feared that, even if he werena dead, he wad be smothered and buried up before I could ride to Glanton and back. And, as I cried, our poor dog Rover came couring to my faither's body and licked his hand, and its pitiful howls mingled wi' the shrieks o' the wind. No kennin' what to do, I lifted my faither to the side o' the road, and tried to place him, half sitting like, wi' his back to the drift, by the foot o' the hedge. 'Oh, watch there, Rover,' said I, and the poor dog ran yowlin' to his feet, and did as I desired it. I sprang upon the back o' the powney, and flew up to the town. Within five minutes I was back, and, in a short time, a number o' folk wi' lichts cam' to our assistance. My faither was covered wi' blood, but without the least sign o' life. I thought my heart wad break, and, for a time, my screams were heard aboon the ragin' o' the storm. My faither was conveyed up to the inn, and, on being stripped, it was found that the horn o' the animal had entered his back below the left shouther; and when a Doctor frae Alnwick saw the body next day, he said he must have died instantly—and, as I have told ye, he never spoke, but just cried, 'O Davy!'

"My feelings were in such a state, that I couldna write mysel', and I got a minister to send a letter to my mother, puir woman, stating what had happened. An acquaintance o' my faither's looked after the cattle, and disposed o' them at Morpeth; and I, having hired a hearse at Alnwick, got the body o' my faither taen hame. A sorrowfu' hame-gaun t was, ye may weel think. Before ever we reached the house I heard the shrieks o' my puir mither. 'O my faitherless bairn!' she cried, as I entered the door; but before she could rise to meet me, she got a glent o' the coffin which they were takin' out o' the hearse, and utterin' a sudden scream, her head fell back, and she gaed clean awa.

"After my faither's funeral, we found that he had died worth only about four hundred pounds, when his debts were paid; and as I had been bred in the droving line, though I was rather young, I just continued it, and my mother and me kept house thegither.

"This was the only thing particular that happened to me for the next thirteen years, or till I was thirty. My mother still kept the house, and I had nae thoughts o' marrying: no but that I had gallanted a wee bit wi' the lasses now and then, but it was naething serious, and was only to be neighbour like. I had ne'er seen ane that I could think o' takin' for better for warse; and, anither thing, if I had seen ane to please me, I didna think my mither would be comfortable wi' a young wife in the house. Weel, ye see, as I was telling ye, things passed on in this way till I was thirty, when a respectable flesher in Edinburgh, that I did a good deal o' business wi', and that had just got married, says to me, in the Grassmarket, ae day—'Davy,' says he, 'ye're no gaun out o' the toun the night—will ye come and tak' tea and supper wi' the wife and me, and a freend or twa?'

"'I dinna care though I do,' says I; 'but I'm no just in a tea-drinkin' dress.'

"'Ne'er mind the dress,' says he. So, at the hour appointed, I stepped awa ower to Hanover Street, in the New Town, where he lived, and was shewn into a fine carpeted room, wi' a great looking-glass, in a gilt frame, ower the chimley-piece—ye could see yoursel' at full length in't the moment you entered the door. I was confounded at the carpets, and the glass, and a sofa, nae less; and, thinks I, 'This shews what kind o' bargains ye get frae me.' There were three or four leddies sitting in the room, and 'Mr Stuart, leddies,' said the flesher; 'Mr Stuart, Mrs So-and-so,' said he again—'Miss Murray, Mr Stuart.' I was like to drap at the impudence o' the creatur—he handed me about as if I had been a bairn at a dancin' school. 'Your servant, leddies,' said I, and didna ken where to look, when I got a glimpse o' my face in the glass, and saw it was as red as crimson. But I was mair than ever put about when the tea was brought in, and the creatur says to me, 'Mr Stuart, will you assist the leddies?' 'Confound him-thought I, 'has he brought me here to mak' a fule o' me! I did attempt to hand round the tea and toast; when, wi' downright confusion, I let a cup fall on Miss Murray's gown. I could have died wi' shame. 'Never mind—never mind, Sir!' said she; 'there is no harm done;' and she spoke sae proper and sae kindly, I was in love wi' her very voice. But when I got time to observe her face, it was a perfect picture; and, through the hale night after, I could do naething but look at, and think o' Miss Murray.

"'Man,' says I to the flesher, the next time I saw him, 'wha was yon Miss Murray?' 'No match for a Grassmarket dealer, Davy,' says he. 'I was thinkin' that,' says I; 'but I wad like to be acquainted wi' her.' 'Ye shall be that', says he; and, after that, there was seldom a month passed that I was in Edinburgh but I saw Miss Murray. But as to courtin', that was out o' the question.

"A short time after this, a relation o' my mither's, who had been a merchant in London, deed; and it was said we were his nearest heirs; and that, as he had left nae will, if we applied, we would get the property—which was worth about five thousand pounds. Weel, three or four years passed awa, and we heard something about the lawsuit, but naething about the money. I was vexed for having onything to say to it. I thought it was only wasting a candle to chase a Will-o'-the-Wisp. About the time I speak o', my mither had turned very frail. I saw there was a wastin' awa o' nature, and she wadna be lang beside me. The day before her death, she took my hand, and 'Davy,' says she to me— 'Davy,' poor body, she repeated—(I think I hear her yet)—'it wad been a great comfort to me, if I had seen ye settled wi' a decent partner before I deed—but it's no to be.'

"Weel, as I was saying, my mither deed, and I found

the house very dowie without her. It wad be about three months after her death—I had been at Whitsunbank; and, when I cam' hame, the servant lasssie put a letter into my hands; and 'Maister,' says she, 'there's a letter—can it be for you, think ye?' for it was directed 'David Stuart, *Esquire* (nae less)———by Coldstream.' So I opened the seal, and to my surprise and astonishment, I found it was frae the man o' business I had employed in London, stating that I had won the law plea, and that I might get the money whene'er I wanted it. I sent for the siller the very next post. Now, ye see, I was sick and tired o' being a bachelor, I had lang wished to be settled in a comfortable matrimonial way—that is, frae e'er I had seen Miss Murray. But ye see, while I was a drover, I was very little at hame—indeed, I was waur than an Arawbian—and had very little peace or comfort either—and I thought it was nae use takin' a wife until something better might cast up. But this wasna the only reason. There wasna a woman on earth that I thought I could live happy wi' but Miss Murray, and she belanged to a genteel family—whether she had ony siller or no, I declare, as I'm to be judged hereafter, I never did inquire. But I saw plainly it wadna do for a rough country drover, jauped up to the very elbows, and sportin' a handfu' o' pound notes the day, and no' worth a penny the morn—I say, I saw plainly it wadna do for the like o' me to draw up by her elbow, and say—'Here's a fine day, ma'am,' or, 'Hae ye ony objections to a walk?' or something o' that sort. But it was weel on for five years since I had singled her out; and, though I never said a word anent the subject o' matrimony, yet I had reason to think she had a shrewd guess that my heart louped quicker when she opened her lips, than if a regiment o' infantry had stealed behint me unobserved, and fired their muskets ower my shouther; and I sometimes thought that her een looked as if she wished to say—'Are ye no gaun to ask me, David?'

"But still, when I thought she had been brought up a leddy in a kind o' manner, I durstna venture to mint the matter; but I was fully resolved and determined, should I succeed in getting the money I was trying for, to break the business clean aff hand. So, ye see, as soon as I got the siller, what does I do, but sits down and writes her a letter, (and sic a letter!) I tauld her a' my mind as freely as though I had been speakin' to you. Weel, ye see, I gaed bang through to Edinburgh at ance, no three days after my letter; and up I goes to the Lawnmarket, where she was living wi' her mither, and raps at the door without ony ceremony. But, when I had rapped, I was in a swither whether to staun till they came out or no; for my heart began to imitate the knocker, or rather to tell me how I ought to have knocked; for it wasna a loud, solid, drover's knock like mine, but it kept rit-tit-tatting on my breast like the knock o' a hair-dresser's 'prentice bringing a bandbox fu' o' curls and ither knick-knackeries, for a leddy to pick and choose on for a fancy-ball; and my face lowed as though ye were haudin' a candle to it; when out comes the servant, and I stammers out—'Is your mistress in?' says I. 'Yes, Sir,' says she; 'walk in.' And in I walked; but I declare I didna ken whether the floor carried me, or I carried the floor; and wha should I see but an auld leddy wi' spectacles—the maiden's mistress, sure enough, though no mine, but my mother-in-law that was to be. So she looked at me and I looked at her. She made a low curtsy, and I tried to mak' a bow; while, all the time, ye might hae heard my heart beatin' at the opposite side o' the room. 'Sir,' says she. 'Ma'am,' says I. I wad hae jumped out o' the window, had it no been four stories high; but, since I've gane this far, I maun say something, thinks I. 'I've ta'en the liberty o' callin', ma'am,' says I. 'Very happy to see ye, Sir,' says she. Weel, thinks I, I'm glad to hear that, however; but, had it been to save my life, I didna ken what to say next. So I sat down; and at length I ventured to ask—'Is your daughter, Miss Jean, at hame, ma'am?' says I. 'I wate is she,' quo' she. 'Jean!' she cried wi' a voice that made the house a' dirl again. 'Comin', mother,' cried my flower o' the forest; and in she cam', skippin' like a perfect fairy. But when she saw me, she started as if she had seen an apparition, and coloured up to the very e'ebrows. As for me, I trembled like an ash leaf, and stepped forward to meet her. I dinna think she was sensible o' me takin' her by the hand; and I was just beginning to say again, 'I've taken the liberty,' when the auld wife had the sense and discretion to leave us by oursel's. I'm sure and certain I never experienced such a relief since I was born. My head was absolutely singing wi' dizziness and love. I made twa or three attempts to say something grand, but I never got half-a-dozen words out; and, finding it a' nonsense, I threw my arms around her waist, pressed her beatin' breast to mine, and, stealin' a hearty kiss, the whole story that I had made such a wark about was ower in a moment. She made a wee bit fuss, and cried, 'Oh fie!' and 'Sir!' or something o' that kind; but I held her to my breast, declared my intentions manfully; that I had been dying for her for five years, and now that I was a gentleman, I thought I might venture to speak. In fact, I held her in my arms until she next door to said, 'Yes!'

"Within a week, we had a'thing settled. I found out she had nae fortune. Her mother belanged to a kind o auld family, that, like mony ithers, cam' down the brae wi' Prince Charles, poor fallow; and they were baith rank Episcopawlians. I found the mither had just sae meikle a-year frae some o' her far-awa' relations; and, had it no' been that they happened to ca' me Stuart, and I tauld her a rigmarole about my grandfaither and Culloden, so that she soon made me out a pedigree, about which I kenned nae mair than the man o' the moon, but keept saying 'yes,' and 'certainly' to a' she said—I say, but for that, and confound me, if she wadna hae curled up her nose at me and my five thousand pounds into the bargain, though her lassie should hae starved. But Jeanie was a perfect angel. She was about two or three and thirty, wi' light brown hair, hazel een, and a waist as jimp and sma' as ye ever saw upon a human creature. She dressed maist as plain as a Quakeress, but was a pattern o' neatness. Indeed, a blind man might seen she was a leddy born and bred; and then for sense—haud at ye there—I wad matched her against the minister and the kirk elders put thegither. But she took that o' her mither—o' whom mair by and by.

"As I was saying, she was an Episcopawlian—a downright, open-day defender o' Archbishop Laud and the bloody Claverhouse; and she wished to prove down through me the priority and supremacy o' bishops ower Presbyteries:—just downright nonsense, ye ken—but there's nae accounting for sooperstition. A great deal depends on how a body's brought up. But what vexed me maist was to think that she wad be gaun to ae place o' public worship on the Sabbath, and me to anither, just like twa strangers; and, maybe, if her minister preached half an hour langer than mine, or mine half an hour langer than hers, or when we had nae intermission, then there was the denner spoiled, and the servant no kenned what time to hae it ready; for the mistress said ane o'clock, and the maister said twa o'clock. Now, I wadna gie tippence for a cauld denner.

"But, as I was telling ye about the auld wife, she thocht fit to read baith us a bit o' a lecture.

"'Now, bairns,' said she, 'I beseech ye, think weel what ye are about; for it were better to rue at the very foot o' the altar, than to rue but ance afterwards, and that ance be for ever. I dinna say this to cast a damp upon your joy, nor that I doubt your affection for ane anither; but I say it as ane who has been a wife, and seen a good deal o' the world an', oh, bairns! I say it as a *mother!* Marriage without love is like the sun in January—often clouded, often trembling through storms, but aye without hea ; and its pillow is com.

ortless as a snow-wreath. But, although love be the principal thing, remember it is not the only thing necessary. Are ye sure that ye are perfectly acquainted wi' each other's haracters and tempers? Aboon a', are ye sure that ye esteem and respect ane anither? Without this, and ye may think that ye like each other, but it's no real love. It's no that kind o' liking that's to last through married years, and be like a singing bird in your breasts to the end o' your days. No, Jeanie, unless your very souls be, as it were, cemented thegither, unless ye see something in him that ye see in naebody else, and unless he sees something in you that he sees in naebody else, dinna marry still. Passionate lovers dinna aye mak' affectionate husbands. Powder will bleeze fiercely awa in a moment; but the smotherin' peat retains fire and heat among its very ashes. Remember that, in baith man and woman, what is passion to-day may be disgust the morn. Therefore, think now; for it will be ower late to think o' my advice hereafter.'

"'Troth, ma'am,' said I, 'and I'm sure I'll be very proud to ca' sic a sensible auld body *mither!*'

"'Rather may ye be proud to call my bairn your *wife*,' said she; 'for, where a man ceases to be proud o' his wife, upon all occasions, and at all times, or where a wife has to blush for her husband, ye may say fareweel to their happiness. However, David,' continued she, 'I dinna doubt but ye will mak' a gude husband; for ye're a sensible, and, I really think, a deservin' lad, and, were it nae mair than your name, the name o' Stuart wad be a passport to my heart. There's but ae thing that I'm feared on—just ae fault that I see in ye—indeed I may say it's the beginning o' a' ithers, and I wad fain hae ye promise to mend it; for it has brought mair misery upon the marriage state than a' the sufferings o' poverty and the afflictions o' death put thegither.'

"'Mercy me, ma'am!' exclaimed I, 'what de ye mean? Ye've surely been misinformed.'

"'I've observed it mysel', David,' said she, seriously.

"'Goodness, ma'am! ye confound me!' says I; 'if its onything that's bad, I'll deny it point blank.'

"'Ye mayna think it bad,' says she, again, 'but I fear ye like a *dram*, and my bairn's happiness demands that I should speak o' it.'

"'A dram!' says I; 'preserve us! is there ony ill in a *dram!*—that's the last thing that I wad hae thought about.'

"'Ask the broken-hearted wife,' says she, 'if there be ony ill in a dram—ask the starving family—ask the jailor and the grave-digger—ask the doctor and the minister o' religion—ask where ye see roups o' furniture at the cross, or the auctioneer's flag wavin' frae the window—ask a deathbed—ask eternity, David Stuart, and they will tell ye if there be ony ill in a dram.

"'I hope, ma'am, says I, and I was a guid deal nettled; 'I hope, ma'am, ye dinna tak' me to be a drunkard? I can declare freely, that, unless maybe at a time by chance, (and the best o' us will mak' a slip now and then,) I never tak' aboon twa or three glasses at a time. Indeed, three's just my set. I aye say to my cronies, there is nae luck till the second tumbler, and nae peace after the fourth. So, ye perceive, there's not the smallest danger o' me.'

"'Ah, but, David,' replied she, 'there *is* danger. Habits grow stronger, nature weaker, and resolution offers less and less resistance; and ye may come to make four, five, or six glasses your set; and frae that to a bottle—your grave—and my bairn a broken-hearted widow.'

"'Really, ma'am,' says I 'ye talked very sensibly before, but ye are awa wi' the harrows now—quite unreasonable a'thegither. However, to satisfy ye upon that score, I'll mak' a vow this very moment, that, except'———

"'Mak' nae rash vows,' says she; 'for a breath mak's them, and less than a breath unmak's them. But mind that, while ye wad be comfortable wi' your cronies, my bairn wad be frettin' her lane; and, though she might see naething when ye cam' hame, that wadna be the way to wear her love round your neck like a chain o' gold; but, night after night, it wad break away link by link, till the whole was lost; and, if ye didna hate, ye wad soon find ye were disagreeable to each other. Nae true woman will condescend to love ony man lang, wha can find society he prefers to hers in an alehouse. I dinna mean to say that ye should never enter a company; but dinna mak' a practice o't.'

"'Weel, the wedding morning cam', and I really thocht it was a great blessin' folk hadna to be married ev ery day. My neckcloth wadna tie as it used to tie, and, but that I wadna swear at onybody on the day o' my marriage, I'm sure I wad hae wished some ill wish on the fingers o' the laundress. She had starched the muslins!—a circumstance, I am perfectly certain, unheard of in the memory o' man, and a thing which my mother ne'er did. It was stiff, crumpled, and clumsy. I vowed it was insupportable. It was within half an hour o' the time o' gaun to the chapel. I had tried a 'rose-knot,' a 'witch-knot,' a 'chaise-driver's knot,' and a 'running-knot,' wi' every kind o' knot that fingers could twist the neckcloth into, but the confounded starch made every ane look waur than anither. Three neckcloths I had rendered unwearable, and the fourth I tied in a 'beau-knot' in despair. The frill o' my sark-breast wadna lie in the position in which I wanted it! For the first time, my very hair rose in rebellion—it wadna lie right; and I cried—'The mischief tak' the barber!' The only part o' my dress wi' which I was satisfied, was a spotless pair o' nankeen pantaloons. I had a dog they ca'd Mettle—it was a son o' poor Rover, that I mentioned to ye before. Weel, it had been raining through the night, and Mettle had been out in the street. The instinct o' the poor dumb brute was puzzled to comprehend the change that had recently taken place in my appearance and habits, and its curiosity was excited. I was sitting before the looking-glass, and had just finished tying my cravat, when Mettle cam' bouncing into the room; he looked up in my face inquisitively, and, to unriddle mair o' the matter, placed his unwashed paws upon my unsoiled nankeens. Every particular claw left its ugly impression. It was provoking beyond endurance. I raised my hand to strike him, but the poor brute wagged his tail, and I only pushed him down, saying, 'Sorrow tak' ye, Mettle! do ye see what ye've dune?' So I had to gang to the kitchen fire and stand before it to dry the damp, dirty foot prints o' the offender. I then found that the waistcoat wadna sit without wrinkles, such as I had ne'er seen before upon a waistcoat o' mine. The coat, too, was insupportably tight below the arms; and, as I turned half round before the glass, I saw that it hung loose between the shouthers! 'As sure as a gun, says I, 'the stupid soul o' a tailor has sent me hame the coat o' a humph-back in a mistak'!' My hat was fitted on in every possible manner—ower the brow and aff the brow—now straight, now cocked to the right side, and again to the left—but to no purpose; I couldna place it to look like mysel', or as I wished. But half-past eight chimed frae St Giles's. I had ne'er before spent ten minutes to dress, shaving included, and that morning I had begun at seven! There was not another moment to spare; I let my hat fit as it would, seized my gloves, and rushed down stairs, and up to the Lawnmarket, where I knocked joyfully at the door o' my bonny bride.

"When we were about to depart for the chapel, the auld leddy rose to gie us her blessing, and placed Jeanie's hand within mine. She shed a few quiet tears, (a common circumstance wi' mithers on similar occasions,) and 'Now, Jeanie,' said she, 'before ye go, I have just anither word or twa to say to ye'——

"'Dearsake, ma'am!' said I, for I was out o' a' patience, 'we'll do very weel wi' what we've heard just now, and ye can say onything ye like when we come back.'

"There was only an elderly gentleman and a young leddy accompanied us to the chapel; for Jeanie and her mother said that that was mair genteel than to have a gilravish o' folk at our heels. For my part, I thought, as we were to be married, we micht as weel mak' a wedding o't. I, however, thought it prudent to agree to their wish, which I did the mair readily, as I had nae particular acquaintance in Edinburgh. The only point that I wad not concede was being conveyed to the chapel in a coach. That my plebeian blood, notwithstanding my royal name o' Stuart, could not overcome. 'Save us a'!' said I, 'if I wadna *walk* to be married, what in the three kingdoms wad tempt me to walk?'

"'Weel,' said the auld leddy, 'my daughter will be the first o' our family that ever gaed on foot to the altar.'

"'An' I assure ye, Ma'am,' said I, 'that I would be the first o' my family that ever gaed in ony ither way; and, in my opinion, to gang on foot, shews a demonstration o' affection and free-will, whereas gaun in a carriage looks as if there were unwillingness or compulsion in the matter.' So she gied up the controversy. Weel, the four o' us walked awa doun the Lawnmarket and High Street, and turned into a close, by the tap o' the Canongate, where the Episcopawlian chapel was situated. For several days, I had read ower the marriage service in the prayer book, in order to master the time to say 'I will,' and other matters. Nevertheless, no sooner did I see the white gown of the clergyman, and feel Jeanie's hand trembling in mine, than he micht as weel hae spoken in Gaelic. I mind something about the ring, and, when the minister was done, I whispered to the best man, 'Is a' ower now?' 'Yes,' said he. 'Heeven be thankit!' thought I.

"Weel, ye see, after being married, and as I had been used to an active life a' my days, I had nae skill in gaun about like a gentleman wi' my hands in my pockets, and I was anxious to tak' a farm. But Jeanie didna like the proposal, and my mother-in-law wadna hear tell o't; so, by her advice, I put out the money, and we lived upon the interest. For six years everything gaed straight, and we were just as happy and as comfortable as a family could be. We had three bairns; the eldest was a daughter, and we ca'ed her Margaret, after her grandmother, who lived wi' us; the second was a son, and I named him Andrew, after my faither; and our third, and youngest, we ca'ed Jeanie, after her mother. They were as clever, bonny, and obedient bairns as ye could see, and everybody admired them. There was ane Lucky Macnaughtan kept a tavern in Edinburgh at the time. A sort o' respectable folk used to frequent the house, and I was in the habit o' gaun at night to smoke my pipe, and hear the news about Bonaparte and the rest o' them; but it was very seldom that I exceeded three tumblers. Weel, among the customers there was ane that I had got very intimate wi'—as genteel and decent a looking man as ye could see—indeed I took him to be a particular serious and honest man. So there was ae night that I was rather mair than ordinary hearty, and says he to me, 'Mr Stuart,' says he, 'will you lend your name to a bit paper for me?' 'No I thank ye, Sir,' says I; 'I never wish to be caution for onybody.' 'It's of no consequence,' said he, and there was no more passed. But, as I was rising to gang hame, 'Come, tak' anither, Mr Stuart,' said he; 'I'm next the wa' wi' ye—I'll stand treat.' Wi' sair pressing I was prevailed upon to sit doun again, and we had anither and anither, till I was perfectly insensible. What took place, or how I got hame, I couldna tell, and the only thing I remember was a head fit to split the next day, and Jeanie very ill-pleased and powty ways. However, I thought nae mair about it, and I was extremely glad I had refused to be bond for the person who asked me; for, within three months, I learned that he had broken and absconded wi' a vast o' siller. I was just a day or twa after I had heard the intelligence, I was telling Jeanie and her mother o' the circumstance, and what an escape I had had, when the servant lassie shewed a bank clerk into the room. 'Tak' a seat, Sir,' said I, for I had dealings wi' the bank. 'This is a bad business, Mr Stuart, said he. 'What business? said I, quite astonished. 'Your being security for Mr So-and-so,' said he. 'Me'! cried I, starting up in the middle o' the floor—'Me!—the scoundrel—I denied him point blank!' 'There is your own signature for a thousand pounds,' said the clerk. 'A thousand furies!' exclaimed I, stamping my foot; 'it's a forgery—an infernal forgery!' 'Mr Such-an-one is witness to your hand-writing,' said the clerk. I was petrified; I could hae drawn down the roof o' the house upon my head to bury me! In a moment, a confused recollection o' the proceedings at Lucky Macnaughtan's flashed across my memory, like a flame from the bottomless pit! There was a look o' witherin' reproach in my mother-in-law's een, and I heard her mutterin' between her teeth—'I aye said what his three tumblers wad come to.' But my dear Jeanie bore it like a Christian, as she is. She cam' forward to me—an', poor thing, she kissed my cheek, and says she—'Dinna distress yoursel', David, dear—it canna be helped now—let us pray that this may be a lesson for the future.' I flung my arm round her neck—I couldna speak—but, at last, I said—'O Jeanie, it will be a lesson—and your affection will be a lesson!' Some o' your book-learned folk wad ca' this conduct philosophy in Jeanie; but I, wha kenned every thought in her heart, was aware that it proceeded from her resignation as a true Christian, and her affection as a dutiful wife. Weel, the upshot was, I had robbed mysel' out o' a thousand pounds as simply as ye wad snuff out a candle. You have heard the saying, that sorrow ne'er comes singly; and I am sure, in a' my experience, I have found its truth. At that period, I had twa thousand pounds, bearing six per cent., lying in the hands o' a gentleman o' immense property. Everybody believed him to be as sure as the bank. Scores o' folk had money in his hands. The interest was paid punctually, and I hadna the least suspicion. Weel, I was looking ower the papers one morning at breakfast, and I happened to glance at the list o' bankrupts—(a thing I'm no in the habit o' doing)—when, mercy me! whose name should I see, but the very gentleman's that had my twa thousand pounds! I had the papers in one hand, and a saucer in the other. The saucer and the coffee gaed smash upon the hearth! I trembled frae head to foot. 'O David! what's the matter?' cried Jeanie! 'Matter!' cried I; 'matter! I'm ruined!—we're a' ruined!' But it's o' nae use dwelling on this. The fallow didna pay eighteenpence to the pound—and there was three thousand gaen out o' my five! It was nae use, wi' a young family, to talk o' living on the interest o' our money now. "We maun tak' a farm,' says I; and baith Jeanie and her mother saw there was naething else for it. So I took a farm, which lay partly in the Lammermuirs, and partly in the Merse. It took the thick end of eight hundred pounds to stock it. However, we were very comfortable in it—I found mysel' far mair at hame than I had been in Edinburgh; for I had employment for baith mind and hands, and Jeanie very soon made an excellent farmer's wife. Auld granny, too, said she never had been sae happy; and the bairns were as healthy as the day was lang. We couldna exactly say that we were making what ye may ca' siller; yet we were losing nothing, and every year laying by a little. There was a deepish burn ran near the onstead. We had been about three years in the farm, and our youngest lassie was about nine years auld. It was the summer time; and she had been paidling in the burn, and sooming feathers and bits o' sticks; I was looking after something that had gaen wrang about the threshin' machine, when I heard an unco noise get up, and bairns screamin'. I looked out, and I saw them runnin' and shoutin'—'Miss Jeanie! Miss Jeanie!' I rushed out to the barn-yard. 'What is't, bairns?' cried I. 'Miss Jeanie!—Miss Jeanie!' said they, pointing to the

burn. I flew as fast as my feet could carry me. The burn, after a spate on the hills, often cam' awa in a moment wi' a fury that naething could resist. The flood had come awa upon my bairn—and there, as I ran, did I see her bonny yellow hair whirled round and round, sinking out o' my sight and carried awa doun wi' the stream. There was a linn about thirty yards frae where I saw her, and oh! how I rushed to snatch a grip o' her before she was carried ower the rocks! But it was in vain—a moment sooner and I might ha'e saved her—but she was hurled ower the precipice when I was within an arm's length, and making a grasp at her bit frock! My poor little Jeanie was baith felled and drowned. I plunged into the wheel below the linn, and got her out in my arms. I ran wi' her to the house, and I laid my drowned bairn on her mother's knee. Everything that could be done was done, and a doctor was brought frae Dunse; but the spark o' life was out o' my bit Jeanie. I felt the bereavement very bitterly; and for many a day, when Margaret and Andrew sat down at the table by our sides, my heart filled; for, as I was helpin' their plates, I wad put out my hand again to help anither, but there was nae ither left to help. But Jeanie took our bairn's death far sairer to heart than ever I did. For several years she never was hersel' again, and just seemed dwinin' awa. Sea-bathing was strongly recommended; and as she had a friend in Portobello, I got her to gang there for a week or twa during summer. Our daughter, Margaret, was now about eighteen, and her brother, Andrew, about fifteen, and as I thought it would do them good, I allowed them to gang wi' their mither to the bathing. They were awa for about a month, and I firmly believe that Jeanie was a great deal the better o't. But it was a dear bathing to me, on mony accounts, for a' that. Margaret was an altered lassie a'thegither. She used to be as blithe as a lark in May, and now there was nae gettin' her to do onything; but she sat couring and unhappy, and seighin' every handel-a-while, as though she were miserable. It was past my comprehension, and her mother could assign nae particular reason for it. As for Andrew, he did naething but yammer, yammer, frae morn till night, about the sea; or sail boats, rigged wi' thread and paper sails, in the burn. When he was at the bathing he had been doun about Leith, and had seen the ships, and naething wad serve him but he would be a sailor. Night and day did he torment my life out to set him to sea. But I wadna hear tell o't—his mother was perfectly wild against it, and poor auld granny was neither to haud nor to bind. We had suffered enough frae the burn at our door, without trusting our only son upon the wide ocean. However, all we could say had nae effect; the craik was never out o' his head—and it was still—'I will be a sailor.' Ae night he didna come in as usual for his four-hours, and supper-time cam', and we sent a' round about to seek him, but naebody had heard o' him. We were in unco distress, and it struck me at once that he had run to sea. I saddled my horse that very night and set out for Leith, but could get nae trace o' him. This was a terrible trial to us, and ye may think what it was when I tell ye it was mair than a twelvemonth before we heard tell o' him; and the first accounts we had was a letter by his ain hand, written frae Bengal. We had had a cart down at Dunse for some bits o' things, and the lad brought the letter in his pocket; and weel do I mind how Jeanie cam' fleein' wi' it open in her hand across the fields to where I was looking after some workers thinin' turnips, crying—'David! David—here's a letter frae Andrew!' 'Read it! read it!' cried I—for my een were blind wi' joy. But Andrew's rinnin' awa wasna the only trial that we had to bear up against at this time. As I was tellin' ye, there was an unco change ower Margaret since she had come frae the bathin'; and a while after a young lad, that her mother said they had met wi' at Portobello, began to come about the house. He was the son o' a merchant in Edinburgh, and pretended that he had come to learn to be a farmer wi' a neighbour o' ours. He was a wild, thoughtless, foppish-looking lad, and I didna like him; but Margaret, silly thing, was clean daft about him. Late and early I found him about the house, and I tauld him I couldna allow him, nor ony person, to be within my doors at any such hours. Weel, this kind o' wark was carried on for mair than a year; and a' that I could say or do, Margaret and him were never separate; till at last he drapped aff comin' to the house, and our daughter did naething but seigh and greet. I found that, after bringing her to the point o' marriage, he either wadna, or durstna, fulfil his promise, unless I would pay into his loof a thousand pounds as her portion. I could afford my daughter nae sic sum, and especially no to be thrown awa on the like o' him. But Jeanie cam' to me wi' the tears on her cheeks, and 'O David!' says she, 'there's naething for it but partin' wi' a thousand pounds on the ae hand, or our bairn's death —and her—shame! on the ither!' Oh! if a knife had been driven through my heart, it couldna pierced it like the word *shame!* As a faither, what could I do? I paid him the money, and they were married.

"It's o' nae use tellin' ye how I gaed back in the farm. In the year sixteen my crops warna worth takin' aff the ground, and I had twa score o' sheep smothered the same winter. I fell behint wi' my rent; and household furniture, farm-stock, and everything I had, were to be sold off. The day before the sale, wi' naething but a bit bundle carrying in my hand, I took Jeanie on my ae arm, and her pair auld mither on the other, and wi' a sad and sorrowfu' heart we gaed out o' the door o' the hame where our bairns had been brought up, and a sheriff's officer steeked it behint us. Weel, we gaed to Coldstream, and we took a bit room there, and furnished it wi' a few things that a friend bought back for us at our sale. We were very sair pinched. Margaret's gudeman ne'er looked near us, nor rendered us the least assistance, and she hadna it in her power. There was nae ither alternative that I could see; and I was just gaun to apply for labouring wark, when we got a letter frae Andrew, enclosing a fifty pound bank note. Mony a tear did Jeanie and me shed ower that letter. He informed us that he had been appointed mate o' an East Indiaman, and begged that we would keep ourselves easy, for, while he had a sixpence, his faither and mither should hae the half o't. Margaret's husband very soon squandered away the money he had got frae me, as weel as the property he had got frae his faither; and to escape the jail, he ran off and left his wife and family. They cam' to stop wi' me; and for five years we heard naething o' him. We had begun a shop in the spirit and grocery line, and really we were remarkably fortunate. It was about six years after I had begun business, ae night, just after the shop was shut, Jeanie, and her mother, wha was then about ninety, and Margaret and her bairns, and mysel', were a' sittin' round the fire, when a rap cam' to the door —ane o' the bairns ran and opened it, and twa gentlemen cam' in. Margaret gied a shriek, and ane o' them flung himsel' at her feet. 'Mother!—faither!'—said the other, 'do ye no ken me?' It was our son Andrew, and Margaret's gudeman! I jamp up, and Jeanie jamp up; auld granny raise totterin' to her feet, and the bairns screamed, puir things. I got haud o' Andrew, and his mother got haud o' him, and we a' grat wi' joy. It was such a night o happiness as I had never kenned before. Andrew had been made a ship captain. Margaret's husband had repented o' a' his follies, and was in a good way o' doing in India; and everything has gane right and prospered wi' our whole family frae that day to this."

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE ADOPTED SON.

A TALE OF THE TIMES OF THE COVENANTERS.

'Oh, for the sword of Gideon, to rid the land of tyrants, to bring down the pride of apostates, and to smite the ungodly with confusion!" muttered John Brydone to himself, as he went into the fields in the September of 1645, and beheld that the greater part of a crop of oats, which had been cut down a few days before, was carried off. John was the proprietor of about sixty acres on the south bank of the Ettrick, a little above its junction with the Tweed. At the period we speak of, the talented and ambitious Marquis of Montrose, who had long been an apostate to the cause of the Covenant—and not only an apostate, but its most powerful enemy—having, as he thought, completely crushed its adherents in Scotland, in the pride of his heart led his followers towards England, to support the tottering cause of Charles in the south, and was now with his cavalry quartered at Selkirk, while his infantry were encamped at Philiphaugh, on the opposite side of the river.

Every reader has heard of Melrose Abbey—which is still venerated in its decay, majestic in its ruins—and they have read, too, of the abode of the northern wizard, who shed the halo of his genius over the surrounding scenery. But many have heard of Melrose, of Scott, and of Abbotsford, to whom the existence of Philiphaugh is unknown. It, however, is one of those places where our forefathers laid the foundation of our freedom with the bones of its enemies, and cemented it with their own blood. If the stranger who visits Melrose and Abbotsford pursue his journey a few miles farther, he may imagine that he is still following the source of the Tweed, until he arrive at Selkirk, when he finds that for some miles he has been upon the banks of the Ettrick, and that the Tweed is lost among the wooded hills to the north. Immediately below Selkirk, and where the forked river forms a sort of island, on the opposite side of the stream, he will see a spacious haugh, surrounded by wooded hills, and forming, if we may so speak, an amphitheatre bounded by the Ettrick, between the Yarrow and the Tweed. Such is Philiphaugh; where the arms of the Covenant triumphed, and where the sword of Montrose was blunted for ever.

Now, the sun had not yet risen, and a thick, dark mist covered the face of the earth, when, as we have said, John Brydone went out into his fields, and found that a quantity of his oats had been carried away. He doubted not but they had been taken for the use of Montrose's cavalry; and it was not for the loss of his substance that he grieved, and that his spirit was wroth, but because it was taken to assist the enemies of his country and the persecutors of the truth; for than John Brydone, humble as he was, there was not a more dauntless or a more determined supporter of the Covenant in all Scotland. While he yet stood by the side of his field, and, from the thickness of the morning, was unable to discern objects at a few yards distance, a party of horsemen rode up to where he stood. "Countryman," said one who appeared to be their leader, "can you inform us where the army of Montrose is encamped?"

John, taking them to be a party of the Royalists, sullenly replied—"There's mony ane asks the road they ken," and was proceeding into the field.

"Answer me!" demanded the horseman angrily, and raising a pistol in his hand—"Sir David Lesly commands you."

"Sir David Lesly!" cried John—"the champion of the truth!—the defender of the good cause! If ye be Sir David Lesly, as I trow ye be, get yer troops in readiness, and, before the mist vanish on the river, I will deliver the host o' the Philistines into your hand."

"See that ye play not the traitor," said Lesly, "or the nearest tree shall be unto thee as the gallows was to Haman which he prepared for Mordecai."

"Do even so to me, and more also," replied John, "if ye find me false. But think ye that I look as though I bore the mark of the beast upon my forehead?" he continued, taking off his Lowland bonnet, and gazing General Lesly full in the face.

"I will trust you,' said the General; and, as he spoke, the van of his army appeared in sight.

John having described the situation of the enemy to Sir David, acted as their guide until they came to the Shaw Burn, when the General called a halt. Each man having partaken of a hurried repast, by order of Sir David, the word was given along the line that they should return thanks for being conducted to the place where the enemy of the Kirk and his army slept in imaginary security. The preachers at the head of the different divisions of the army gave out a psalm, and the entire host of the Covenanters, uncovering their heads, joined at the same moment in thanksgiving and praise. John Brydone was not a man of tears, but, as he joined in the psalm, they rolled down his cheeks, for his heart felt, while his tongue uttered praise, that a day of deliverance for the people of Scotland was at hand. The psalm being concluded, each preacher offered up a short but earnest prayer; and each man, grasping his weapon, was ready to lay down his life for his religion and his liberty.

John Brydone, with his bonnet in hand, approaching Sir David, said—"Now, sir, I that ken the ground, and the situation o' the enemy, would advise ye, as a man who has seen some service mysel, to halve your men; let the one party proceed by the river to attack them on the one side, and the other go round the hills to cut off their retreat."*

"Ye speak skilfully," said Sir David, and he gave orders as John Brydone had advised.

The Marquis of Montrose had been disappointed in reinforcements from his sovereign. Of two parties which had been sent to assist him in his raid into England, one had been routed in Yorkshire, and the other defeated on Carlisle

* "But halve your men in equal parts,
Your purpose to fulfil;
Let ae half keep the water-side,
The rest gae round the hill."
Battle of Philiphaugh—Border Ballad.

sands, and only a few individuals from both parties joined him at Selkirk. A great part of his Highlanders had returned home to enjoy their plunder; but his army was still formidable, and he imagined that he had Scotland at his feet, and that he had nothing to fear from anything the Covenanters could bring against him. He had been writing despatches throughout the night; and he was sitting in the best house in Selkirk, penning a letter to his sovereign, when he was startled by the sounds of cannon and of musketry. He rushed to the street. The inhabitants were hurrying from their houses—many of his cavalry were mingling half-dressed, with the crowd. "To horse!—to horse!" shouted Montrose. His command was promptly obeyed; and, in a few minutes, at the head of his cavalry, he rushed down the street leading to the river towards Philiphaugh. The mist was breaking away, and he beheld his army fleeing in every direction. The Covenanters had burst upon them as a thunderbolt. A thousand of his best troops lay dead upon the field.* He endeavoured to rally them, but in vain; and, cutting his way through the Covenanters, he fled at his utmost speed, and halted not until he had arrived within a short distance of where the delightful watering town of Innerleithen now stands, when he sought a temporary resting-place in the house of Lord Traquair.

John Brydone, having been furnished with a sword, had not been idle during the engagement; but, as he had fought upon foot, and the greater part of Lesly's army were cavalry, he had not joined in the pursuit; and, when the battle was ever, he conceived it to be as much his duty to act the part of the Samaritan, as it had been to perform that of a soldier. He was busied, therefore, on the field in administering, as he could, to the wounded; and whether they were Cavalier or Covenanter, it was all one to John; for he was not one who cou d trample on a fallen foe, and in their hour of need he considered all men as brothers. He was passing within about twenty yards of a tent upon the Haugh, which had a superior appearance to the others—it was larger, and the cloth which covered it was of a finer quality; when his attention was arrested by a sound unlike all that belonged to a battle-field—the wailing and the cries of an infant! He looked around, and near him lay the dead body of a lady, and on her breast, locked in her cold arms, a child of a few months old was struggling. He ran towards them—he perceived that the lady was dead—he took the child in his arms—he held it to his bosom—he kissed its cheek—"Puir thing!—puir thing!" said John; "the innocent hae been left to perish amang the unrighteous." He was bearing away the child, patting its cheek, and caressing it as he went, and forgetting the soldier in the nurse, when he said unto himself—"Puir innocent!—an', belike yer wrang-headed faither is fleeing for his life, an' thinking aboot ye an' yer mother as he flees! Weel, ye may be claimed some day, an' I maun do a' in my power to gie an account o' ye." So, John turned back towards the lifeless body of the child's mother; and he perceived that she wore a costly ring upon her finger, and bracelets on her arms; she also held a small parcel, resembling a book, in her hands, as though she had fled with it, without being able to conceal it, and almost at the door of her tent she had fallen with her child in her arms, and her treasure in her hand. John stooped upon the ground, and he took the ring from her finger, and the bracelets from her arms; he took also the packet from her hands, and in it he found other jewels, and a purse of gold pieces. "These may find thee a faither, puir thing," said he; "or if they do not, they may befriend thee when John Brydone cannot."

He carried home the child to his own house, and his wife had at that time an infant daughter at her breast, and she took the foundling from her husband's arms, and became unto it as a mother, nursing it with her own child. But John told not his wife of the purse, nor the ring, nor the rich jewels.

The child had been in their keeping for several weeks, but no one appeared to claim him. "The bairn may hae been baptized," said John; "but it wud be after the fashion o' the sons o' Belial; but he is a brand plucked from the burning—he is my bairn noo, and I shall be unto him as a faither—I'll tak upon me the vows—and, as though he he were flesh o' my ain flash, I will fulfil them." So the child was baptized; and, in consequence of his having been found on Philiphaugh, and of the victory there gained, he was called Philip; and, as John had adopted him as his son, he bore also the name of Brydone. It is unnecessary for us to follow the foundling through his years of boyhood. John had two children—a son named Daniel, and Mary, who was nursed at her mother's breast with the orphan Philip. As the boy grew up, he called his protectors by the name of father and mother; but he knew they were not such, for John had shewn him the spot upon the Haugh where he had found him wailing on the bosom of his dead mother. Frequently, too, when he quarrelled with his playfellows, they would call him the "Philiphaugh foundling," and "the cavalier's brat;" and on such occasions Mary was wont to take his part, and, weeping, say "he was her brother." As he grew up, however, it grieved his protector to observe, that he manifested but little of the piety, and less of the sedateness of his own children. "What is born i' the bane, isna easily rooted oot o' the flesh," said John; and in secret he prayed and wept that his adopted son might be brought to a knowledge of the truth. The days of the Commonwealth had come, and John and his son Daniel rejoiced in the triumphs of the Parliamentary armies, and the success of its fleets; but, while they spoke, Philip would mutter between his teeth—"It is the triumph of murderers!" He believed that but for the ascendency of the Commonwealth, and he might have obtained some tidings of his family; and this led him to hate a cause which the activity of his spirit might have tempted him to embrace.

Mary Brydone had always been dear to him; and, as he grew towards manhood, he gazed on her beautiful features with delight; but it was not the calm delight of a brother contemplating the fair face of a sister; for Philip's heart glowed as he gazed, and the blush gathered on his cheek. One summer evening, they were returning from the fields together, the sun was sinking in the west, the Ettrick murmured along by their side, and the plaintive voice of the wild-dove was heard from the copse-wood which covered the hills.

"Why are you so sad, brother Philip?" said Mary, "would you hide anything from your own sister?"

"Do not call me *brother*, Mary," said he earnestly—"do not call me *brother!*"

"Who would call you brother, Philip, if I did not?" returned she affectionately.

"Let Daniel call me brother," said he, eagerly; "but not you—not you!"

She burst into tears. "When did I offend you, Philip," she added, "that I may not call you brother?"

"Never, Mary!—never!" he exclaimed; "call me Philip—*your* Philip!—anything but brother!" He took her hand within his—he pressed it to his bosom. "Mary," he added, "I have neither father, mother, brother, nor kindred—I am alone in the world—let there be something that I can call *mine*—something that will love me in return! Do you understand me, Mary?"

* Sir Walter Scott says that "the number of slain in the field did not exceed three or four hundred." All the authorities I have seen state the number at a thousand. He also accuses Lesly of abusing his victory by slaughtering many of his prisoners in cold blood. Now, it is true that a hundred of the Irish adventurers were shot; but this was in pursuance of an act of both Parliaments, and not from any private revenge on the part of General Lesly.

"You are cruel, Philip," said she, sobbing as she spoke; "you know I love you—I have always loved you!"

"Yes! as you love Daniel—as you love your father; but not as"——

"You love Mr Duncan," he would have said; but his heart upbraided him for the suspicion, and he was silent. It is here necessary to inform the reader that Mr Duncan was a preacher of the Covenant, and John Brydone revered him much. He was much older than Mary, but his heart cleaved to her, and he had asked her father's consent to become his son-in-law. John, though a stern man, was not one who would force the inclination of his daughter; but Mr Duncan was, as he expressed it, "one of the faithful in Israel," and his proposal was pleasing to him. Mary, however, regarded the preacher with awe, but not with affection.

Mary felt that she understood Philip—that she loved him, and not as a brother. She hid her face upon his shoulder, and her hand returned the pressure of his. They entered the house together, and her father perceived that his daughter's face was troubled. The manner of both was changed. He was a shrewd man as well as a stern man, and he also suspected the cause.

"Philip," said he calmly, "for twenty years hae I protected ye an' watched owre ye wi' a faither's care, an' I fear that, in return for my care, ye hae brought sorrow into the bosom o' my family, an' instilled disobedience into the flesh o' my ain flesh. But, though ye hae cleaved—as it maun hae been inherent in your bluid—after the principles o' the sons o' this warld, yet, as I ne'er found ye guilty o' a falsehood, an' as I believe ye incapable o' ane, tell me truly, why is yer countenance, an that o' Mary, changed—and why are ye baith troubled to look me straight in the face? Answer me—hae ye taught her to forget that she is yer sister?"

"Yes!" answered Philip; "and can it offend the man who saved me, who has watched over me, and sheltered me from infancy till now, that I should wish to be his son in more than in name?"

"It does offend me, Philip," said the Covenanter; "even unto death it offends me! I hae consented that my dochter shall gie her hand to a guid an' a godly man, who will look after her weelfare baith here and hereafter. And ye kenned this—she kenned it, and she didna refuse; but ye hae come like the son o' darkness, an' sawn tares amang the wheat."

"Father," said Philip, "if you will still allow me to call you by that name—foundling though I am—unknown as I am—in what am I worse than him to whom you would sacrifice your daughter's happiness?"

"Sacrifice her happiness!" interrupted the old man; "hoo daur ye speak o' happiness, wha kens nae meanin' for the word but the vain pleasures o' this sinfu' warld! Think ye that, as a faither, an' as ane that has my offspring to answer for, that I daur sacrifice the eternal happiness o' my bairn, for the gratification o' a temporary feelin' which ye encourage the day and may extinguish the morn. Na, sir; they wha wad ken what true happiness is, maun first learn to crucify human passions. Mary," added he, sternly, turning to his daughter, "repeat the fifth commandment."

She had been weeping before, and she now wept aloud.

"Repeat it!" replied her father yet more sternly.

"Honour thy father and thy mother," added she, sobbing as she spoke.

"See, then, bairn," rejoined her father, "that ye remember that commandment on yer heart, as weel as on yer tongue. Remember, too, that o' a' the commands, it's the only ane to which a promise is attached; and, noo, mark what I say, an', as ye wadna disobey me, see, at yer peril, that ye ne'er permit this young man to speak to ye again, save only as a brither"

"Sir," said Philip, "we have grown up together like twin tendrils on the same vine, and can ye wonder that our hearts have become entwined round each other, or that they can tear asunder because ye command it! Or, could I look on the face of an angel"——

"Out on ye, blasphemer!" interrupted the Covenanter—"wad ye apply siccan epithets to a bairn o' mine? Once for all, hear me, Philip; there are but twa ways o't, and ye can tak yer choice. It's the first time I hae spoken to ye roughly, but it isna the first time my spirit has mourned owre ye. I hae tried to lead ye in the right path; ye hae had baith precept and example afore ye; but the leaven o' this warld—the leaven o' the persecutors o' the Kirk and the Covenant—was in yer very bluid; an' I believe, if opportunity had offered, ye wad hae drawn yer sword in the unholy cause. A' that I could say, an' a' that I could do, religion has ne'er had ony place in yer heart; but ye hae yearned aboot yer faither, and ye hae mourned aboot yer mother—an' that was natural aneugh—but, oh! ye hae also desired to cling to the cauld formality o' Episcopacy, as they nae doot did: an' should ye e'er discover that yer parents hae been Papists, I believe that ye wad become ane too! An' aften, when the conversation turned upon the apostate Montrose, or the gallant Lesly, I hae seen ye manifest the spirit an' the very look o' a persecutor. Were I to gie up my dochter to such a man, I should be worse than the heathen wha sacrifice their offspring to the abomination o' idols. Noo, Philip, as I hae tauld ye, there are but twa ways o't. Either this very hour gie me yer solemn promise that ye will think o' Mary as to be yer wife nae mair, or, wi' the risin' o' to morrow's sun, leave this house for ever!"

"Sir," said Philip bitterly, "your last command I can obey, though it would be with a sad heart—though it would be in despair!—your first I cannot—I will not!"

"You must—you *shall!*" replied the Covenanter.

"Never!" answered Philip.

"Then," replied the old man, "leave the roof that has sheltered ye frae yer cradle!"

"I will!" said Philip, and the tears ran down his cheeks. He walked towards Mary, and, with a faltering voice, said—"Farewell, Mary!—Farewell! I did not expect this; but do not forget me—do not give your hand to another—and we shall meet again!"

"You shall not!" interrupted the inexorable old man.

Mary implored her father, for her sake, and for the sake of her departed mother, who had loved Philip as her own son, that he would not drive him from the house, and Daniel, too, entreated; but their supplications were vain.

"Farewell, then!" said Philip; "and, though I depart in misery, let it not be with thy curse, but let the blessing of him who has been to me a father until now, go with me."

"The blessin' o' Heaven be wi' ye and around ye, Philip!" groaned the Covenanter, struggling to conceal a tear: 'but, if ye will follow the dictates o' yer rebellious heart and leave us, tak wi' ye yer property."

"My property!" repeated Philip.

"Yer property," returned the old man. "Twenty years has it lain in that drawer, an' during that time eyes hae not seen it, nor fingers touched it. It will assist ye noo; an', when ye enter the warld, may throw some light upon yer parentage."

He went to a small drawer, and, unlocking it, he took out the jewels, the bracelet, the ring, and the purse of gold, and, placing them in Philip's hands, exclaimed—"Fareweel!—fareweel!—but it maun be!" and he turned away his head.

"O Mary!" cried Philip, "keep—keep this in remembrance of me," as he attempted to place the ring in her hand.

"Awa, sir!" exclaimed the old man, vehemently, "wad ye bribe my bairn into disobedience, by the ornaments of folly an' iniquity! Awa, ye son o' Belial, an' provoke me not to wrath!"

Philip groaned, he dashed his hand upon his brow, and rushed from the house. Mary wept long and bitterly, and Daniel walked to and fro across the room, mourning for one whom he loved as a brother. The old man went out into the fields to conceal the agony of his spirit; and, when he had wandered for a while, he communed with himself, saying, "I hae dune foolishly, an' an ungodly action hae I performed this nicht; I hae driven oot a young man upon a wicked warld, wi' a' his sins an' his follies on his head; an', if evil come upon him, or he plunge into the paths o' wickedness, his bluid an' his guilt will be laid at my hands! Puir Philip!" he added; "after a', he had a kind heart!" And the stern old man drew the sleeve of his coat across his eyes. In this frame of mind he returned to the house. "Has Philip not come back?" said he, as he entered. His son shook his head sorrowfully, and Mary sobbed more bitterly.

"Rin ye awa doun to Melrose, Daniel," said he, "an' I'll awa up to Selkirk, an' inquire for him, an' bring him back. Yer faither has allowed passion to get the better o' him, an' to owercome baith the man an' the Christian."

"Run, Daniel, run!" cried Mary eagerly And the old man and his son went out in search of him.

Their inquiries were fruitless. Days, weeks, and months rolled on, but nothing more was heard of poor Philip. Mary refused to be comforted; and the exhortations, the kindness, and the tenderness shewn towards her by the Rev. Mr Duncan, if not hateful, were disagreeable. Dark thoughts, too, had taken possession of her father's mind, and he frequently sank into melancholy; for the thought haunted him that his adopted son, on being driven from his house, had laid violent hands upon his own life; and this idea embittered every day of his existence.

More than ten years had passed since Philip had left the house of John Brydone. The Commonwealth was at an end, and the second Charles had been recalled; but exile had not taught him wisdom, nor the fate of his father discretion. He madly attempted to be the lord and ruler of the people's conscience, as well as King of Britain. He was a libertine with some virtues—a bigot without religion. In the pride, or rather folly of his heart, he attempted to force Prelacy upon the people of Scotland; and he let his blood-hounds loose, to hunt the followers of the Covenant from hill to hill, to murder them on their own hearths, and, with the blood of his victims, to blot out the word *conscience* from the vocabulary of Scotchmen. The Covenanters sought their God in the desert and on the mountains which he had reared; they worshipped him in the temples which his own hands had framed; and there the persecutor sought them, the destroyer found them, and the sword of the tyrant was bathed in the blood of the worshipper! Even the family altar was profaned; and, to raise the voice of prayer and praise in the cottage to the King of kings, was held to be as treason against him who professed to represent him on earth. At this period, too, Graham of Claverhouse—whom some have painted as an angel, but whose actions were worthy of a fiend—at the head of his troopers, who were called by the profane, *the ruling elders of the kirk*, was carrying death and cold-blooded cruelty throughout the land.

Now, it was on a winter night in the year 1677, a party of troopers were passing near the house of old John Brydone, and he was known to them not only as being one who was a defender of the Covenant, but also as one who harboured the preachers, and whose house was regarded as a conventicle.

"Let us rouse the old psalm-singing heretic who lives here, from his knees," said one of the troopers.

"Ay, let us stir him up," said the sergeant, who had the command of the party; "he is an old offender, and I don't see we can make a better night's work than drag him along, bag and baggage, to the Captain. I have heard as how it was he that betrayed our commander's kinsman, the gallant Montrose."

"Hark! hark!—softly! softly!" said another, "let us dismount—hear how the nasal drawl of the conventicle moans through the air! My horse pricks his ears at the sound already. We shall catch them in the act."

Eight of the party dismounted, and, having given their horses in charge to four of their comrades, who remained behind, walked on tiptoe to the door of the cottage. They heard the words given, and sung—

> "When cruel men against us rose
> To make of us their prey!"

"Why, they are singing treason" said one of the troopers. "What more do we need?"

The sergeant placed his forefinger on his lips, and, for about ten minutes, they continued to listen. The song of praise ceased, and a person commenced to read a chapter. They heard him also expound to his hearers as he read.

"It is enough!" said the sergeant; and, placing their shoulders against the door, it was burst open. "You are our prisoners!" exclaimed the troopers, each man grasping a sword in his right hand, and a pistol in the left.

"It is the will of Heaven!" said the Rev. Mr Duncan; for it was him who had been reading and expounding the Scriptures; "but, if ye stretch forth your hands against a hair o' our heads, HE, without whom a sparrow cannot fall to the ground, shall remember it against ye at the great day o' reckoning, when the trooper will be stripped of his armour and his right hand shall be a witness against him!"

The soldiers burst into a laugh of derision. "No more of your homily, reverend oracle," said the sergeant; "I have an excellent recipe for short sermons here; utter another word, and you shall have it!" The troopers laughed again, and the sergeant, as he spoke, held his pistol in the face of the preacher.

Besides the clergyman there were in the room old John Brydone, his son Daniel, and Mary.

"Well, old greybeard," said the sergeant, addressing John, "you have been reported as a dangerous and disaffected Presbyterian knave, as we find you to be; you are also accused of being a harbourer and an accomplice of the preachers of sedition; and, lo! we have found that also your house is used as a conventicle. We have caught you in the act, and we shall take every soul of you as evidence against yourselves. So come along, old boy—I should only be doing my duty by blowing your brains against the wall; but that is a ceremony which our commander may wish to see performed in his own presence!"

"Sir," said John, "I neither fear ye nor your armed men. Tak me to the bluidy Claverhouse, if you will, and at the day o' judgment it shall be said—'*Let the murderers o' John Brydone stand forth!*'"

"Let us dispatch them at once," said one of the troopers.

"Nay," said the sergeant; "bind them together, and drive them before us to the Captain: I don't know but he may wish to *do justice* to them with his own hand."

"The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel," groaned Mr Duncan.

Mary wrung her hands—"Oh, spare my father!" she cried.

"Wheesht, Mary!" said the old man; "as soon wad a camel pass through the eye o' a needle, as ye wad find compassion in the hands o' these men!"

"Bind the girl and the preacher together," said the sergeant.

"Nay, by your leave, sergeant," interrupted one of the troopers, "I would'nt be the man to lift a hand against a pretty girl like that, if you would give me a regiment for it."

"Ay, ay, Macdonald," replied the sergeant—"this comes of your serving under that canting fellow, Lieutenant Mowbray—he has no love for the service; and confound me if I don't believe he is half a Roundhead in his heart. Tie the hands of the girl I command you."

"I will not!" returned Macdonald; "and hang me if any one else shall!"—And, with his sword in his hand, he placed himself between Mary and his comrades.

"If you do not bind her hands, I shall cause others to bind yours," said the sergeant.

"They may try that who dare!" returned the soldier, who was the most powerful man of the party; "but what I've said I'll stand to."

"You shall answer for this to-morrow," said the sergeant, sullenly, who feared to provoke a quarrel with the trooper.

"I will answer it," replied the other.

John Brydone, his son Daniel, and the Rev. Mr Duncan, were bound together with strong cords, and driven from the house. They were fastened, also, to the horses of the troopers; and, as they were dragged along, the cries and the lamentations of Mary followed them; and the troopers laughed at her wailing, or answered her cries with mockery, till the sound of her grief became inaudible in the distance, when again they imitated her cries, to harrow up the feelings of her father.

Claverhouse, and a party of his troops, were then in the neighbourhood of Traquair; and before that man, who knew not what mercy was, John Brydone, and his son, and the preacher, were brought. It was on the afternoon of the day following that on which they had been made prisoners, that Claverhouse ordered them to be brought forth. He was sitting, with wine before him, in the midst of his officers; and amongst them was Lieutenant Mowbray, whose name was alluded to by the sergeant.

"Well, knaves!" began Claverhouse, "ye have been singing, praying, preaching, and holding conventicles.—Do ye know how Grahame of Claverhouse rewards such rebels?"

As the prisoners entered, Lieutenant Mowbray turned away his head, and placed his hand upon his brow.

"Sir," said John, addressing Claverhouse, "I'm neither knave nor rebel—I hae lifted up my voice to the God o' my faithers, according to my conscience; and, unworthy as I am o' the least o' His benefits, for threescore years and ten he has been my shepherd and deliverer, and, if it be good in His sight, He will deliver me now. My trust is in Him, and I fear neither the frown nor the sword o' the persecutor."

"Have done, grey-headed babbler!" cried Claverhouse.

Lieutenant Mowbray, who still sat with his face from the prisoners, raised his handkerchief to his eyes.

"Captain," said Mr Duncan, "there's a day coming when ye shall stand before the great Judge, as we now stand before you; and when the remembrance o' this day, and the blood o' the righteous which ye hae shed, shall be written with letters o' fire on yer ain conscience, and recorded against ye; and ye shall call upon the rocks and mountains to cover ye"——

"Silence!" exclaimed Claverhouse. "Away with them!" he added, waving his hand to his troopers—"shoot them before sunrise!"

Shortly after the prisoners had been conveyed from the presence of Claverhouse, Lieutenant Mowbray withdrew; and having sent for the soldier who had interfered on behalf of Mary—"Macdonald," he began, "you were present yesterday when the prisoners, who are to die to-morrow, were taken. Where did you find them?"

"In the old man's house," replied the soldier; and he related all that he had seen, and how he had interfered to save the daughter. The heart of the officer was touched, and he walked across his room, as one whose spirit was troubled. "You did well, Macdonald!" said he, at length—"you did well!" He was again silent, and again he added—"And you found the preacher in the old man's house—*you found* HIM *there!*" There was an anxious wildness in the tone of the lieutenant.

"We found him there" replied the soldier.

The officer was again silent—again he thoughtfully paced across the floor of his apartment At length turning to the soldier, he added—"I can trust you, Macdonald. When night has set in, take your horse and ride to the house of the elder prisoner, and tell his daughter—the maiden whom you saved—to have horses in readiness for her father, her brother, and—and her—her *husband!*" said the lieutenant faltering as he spoke; and when he had pronounced the word *husband*, he again paused, as though his heart were full. The soldier was retiring—"Stay," added the officer, "tell her, her father, her brother, and—the preacher, shall not die; before day-break she shall see them again; and give her this ring as a token that ye speak truly."

He took a ring from his finger, and gave it into the hands of the soldier.

It was drawing towards midnight. The troops of Claverhouse were quartered around the country, and his three prisoners, still bound to each other, were confined in a small farm-house, from which the inhabitants had been expelled. They could hear the heavy and measured tread of the sentinel pacing backward and forward in front of the house; the sound of his footsteps seemed to measure out the moments between them and eternity. After they had sung a psalm and prayed together—"I am auld," said John Brydone, "and I fear not to die, but rather glory to lay down my life for the great cause—but, oh, Daniel! my heart yearns that yer bluid also should be shed—had they only spared ye, to hae been a protector to oor puir Mary!—or had I no driven Philip frae the house"——

"Mention not the name of the cast-away," said the minister.

"Dinna mourn, faither," answered Daniel, "an arm mair powerful than that of man will be her supporter and protector."

"Amen!" responded Mr Duncan. "She has aye been cauld to me, and has turned the ear o' the deaf adder to the voice o' my affection; but even noo, when my thochts should be elsewhere, the thocht o' her burns in my heart like a coal o' my fire."

While they yet spoke, a soldier, wrapt up in a cloak approached the sentinel, and said—

"It is a cold night, brother."

"Piercing," replied the other, striking his feet upon the ground.

"You are welcome to a mouthful of my spirit-warmer," added the first, taking a bottle from beneath his cloak.

"Thank ye!" rejoined the sentinel; "but I don't know your voice. You don't belong to our corps, I think."

"No," answered the other; "but it matters not for that—brother soldiers should give and take."

The sentinel took the bottle and raised it to his lips; he drank, and swore the liquor was excellent.

"Drink again," said the other; "you are welcome; it is as good as a double cloak around you." And the sentinel drank again.

"Good night, comrade," said the trooper. "Good night," replied the sentinel; and the stranger passed on.

Within half an hour, the same soldier, still muffled up in his cloak, returned. The sentinel had fallen against the door of the house, and was fast asleep. The stranger proceeded to the window—he raised it—he entered. "Fear nothing," he whispered to the prisoners, who were bound to staples that had been driven into the opposite wall of the room. He cut the cords with which their hands and their feet were fastened.

"Heaven reward ye for the mercy o' yer heart, and the courage o' this deed," said John.

"Say nothing," whispered their deliverer, "but follow me."

Each man crept from the window, and the stranger again closed it behind them. "Follow me, and speak not," whispered he again; and, walking at his utmost speed, he conducted them for several miles across the hills; but still he spoke

not. Old John marvelled at the manner of their deliverer; and he marvelled yet more when he led them to Philiphaugh, and to the very spot where, more than thirty years before, he had found the child on the bosom of its dead mother; and there the stranger stood still, and, turning round to those he had delivered—"Here we part," said he; "hasten to your own house, but tarry not. You will find horses in readiness, and flee into Westmoreland; inquire there for the person to whom this letter is addressed; he will protect you." And he put a sealed letter into the hands of the old man, and, at the same time, he placed a purse in the hands of Daniel, saying, "This will bear your expenses by the way—Farewell!—farewell!" They would have detained him, but he burst away, again exclaiming, as he ran —"Farewell!"

"This is a marvellous deliverance," said John; "it is a mystery, an' for him to leave us on this spot—on *this very spot*—where puir Philip"——And here the heart of the old man failed him.

We need not describe the rage of Claverhouse, when he found, on the following day, that the prisoners had escaped; and how he examined and threatened the sentinels with death, and cast suspicious glances upon Lieutenant Mowbray; but he feared to accuse him, or quarrel with him openly.

As John, with the preacher and his son, approached the house, Mary heard their footsteps, and rushed out to meet them, and fell weeping upon her father's neck. "My bairn!" cried the old man; "we are restored to ye as from the dead! Providence has dealt wi' us in mercy an' in mystery."

His four farm-horses were in readiness for their flight; and Mary told him how the same soldier who had saved her from sharing their fate, had come to their house at midnight, and assured her that they should not die, and to prepare for their flight; "And," added she, "in token that he who had sent him would keep his promise towards you, he gave me this ring, requesting me to wear it for your deliverer's sake."

"It is Philip's ring!" cried the old man, striking his hand before his eyes—"it is Philip's ring!"

"*My* Philip's!" exclaimed Mary; "oh, then, he lives!—he lives!"

The preacher leaned his brow against the walls of the cottage and groaned.

"It is still a mystery," said the old man, yet pressing his hands before his eyes in agony; "but it is—it maun be him. It was Philip that saved us—that conducted us to the very spot where I found him! But, oh," he added, "I wud rather I had died, than lived to ken that he has drawn his sword in the ranks o' the oppressor, and to murder the followers after the truth."

"Oh, dinna think that o him, father!" exclaimed Mary; "Philip wudna—he couldna draw his sword but to defend the helpless!"

Knowing that they had been pursued and sought after, they hastened their flight to England, to seek the refuge to which their deliverer had directed them. But as they drew near to the Borders, the Rev. Mr Duncan suddenly exclaimed—"Now, here we must part—part for ever! It is not meet that I should follow ye farther. When the sheep are pursued by the wolves, the shepherd should not flee from them. Farewell, dear friends—and, oh! farewell to you, Mary! Had it been sinful to hae loved you, I would hae been a guilty man this day—for, oh! beyond a' that is under the sun, ye hae been dear to my heart, and your remembrance has mingled wi' my very devotions. But I maun root it up, though, in so doing, I tear my very heart-strings. Farewell!—farewell! Peace be wi' you—and may ye a' be happier than will ever be the earthly lot o' Andrew Duncan!"

The tears fell upon Mary's cheeks; for, though she could not love, she respected the preacher, and she esteemed him for his worth. Her father and brother entreated him to accompany them. "No! no!" he answered; "I see how this flight will end. Go—there is happiness in store for you; but my portion is with the dispersed and the persecuted." And he turned and left them.

Lieutenant Mowbray was disgusted with the cold-blooded butchery of the service in which he was engaged; and, a few days after the escape of John Brydone and his son, he threw up his commission and proceeded to Dumfriesshire. It was a Sabbath evening, and near nightfall; he had wandered into the fields alone, for his spirit was heavy. Sounds of rude laughter broke upon his ear; and, mingled with the sound of laughter, was a voice as if in earnest prayer. He hurried to a small wood from whence the sounds proceeded, and there he beheld four troopers, with their pistols in their hands, and before them was a man, who appeared to be a preacher, bound to a tree.

"Come, old Psalmody!" cried one of the troopers, raising his pistol, and addressing their intended victim, who was engaged in prayer; "make ready—we have other jobs on hand —and we gave you time to speak a prayer, but not to preach."

Mowbray rushed forward. He sprang between the troopers and their victim. "Hold! ye murderers, hold!" he exclaimed. "Is it thus that ye disgrace the name of soldiers by washing your hands in the blood of the innocent."

They knew Mowbray, and they muttered, "You are no officer of ours now; he is our prisoner, and our orders are to shoot every conventicle knave who falls into our hands."

"Shame on him who would give such orders!" said Mowbray; and "shame on those who would execute them! There," added he, "there is money! I will ransom him."

With an imprecation, they took the money that was offered them, and left their prisoner to Mowbray. He approached the tree where they had bound him—he started back—it was the Rev. Andrew Duncan!

"Rash man!" exclaimed Mowbray, as he again stepped forward to unloose the cords that bound him. "Why have ye again cast yourself into the hands of the men who seek your blood? Do ye hold your life so cheap, that, in one week, ye would risk to sell it twice? Why did not ye, with your father, your brother, and your *wife*, flee into England, where protection was promised!"

"My father!—my brother!—my wife!—mine!—mine!" repeated the preacher wildly. "There are no such names for my tongue to utter!—none!—none to drop their love as morning dew upon the solitary soul o' Andrew Duncan!"

"Are they murdered?" exclaimed Mowbray, suddenly, in a voice of agony.

"Murdered!" said the preacher, with increased bewilderment. "What do you mean?—or wha do you mean?"

"Tell me," cried Mowbray, eagerly; "are not you the husband of Mary Brydone?"

"Me!—me!" cried the preacher. "No!—no!—I loved her as the laverock loves the blue lift in spring, and her shadow cam between me and my ain soul—but she wadna hearken unto my voice—she is nae wife o' mine!"

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Mowbray; and he clasped his hands together.

It is necessary, however, that we now accompany John Brydone and his family in their flight into Westmoreland. The letter which their deliverer had put into their hands was addressed to a Sir Frederic Mowbray; and, when they arrived at the house of the old knight, the heart of the aged Covenanter almost failed him for a moment; for it was a proud-looking mansion, and those whom he saw around wore the dress of the Cavaliers.

"Who are ye?" inquired the servant who admitted them to the house.

"Deliver this letter into the hands of your master," said the Covenanter; "our business is with him."

"It is the handwriting of Master Edward," said the

servant, as he took the letter into his hand; and, having conducted them to a room, he delivered it to Sir Frederic.

In a few minutes the old knight hurried into the room, where the Covenanter, and his son and his daughter, stood. "Welcome, thrice welcome!" he cried, grasping the hand of the old man; "here you shall find a resting-place and a home, with no one to make you afraid."

He ordered wine and food to be placed before them, and he sat down with them.

Now John marvelled at the kindness of his host, and his heart burned within him—and, in the midst of all, he thought of the long lost Philip, and how he had driven him from his house—and his cheek glowed and his heart throbbed with anxiety. His son marvelled also, and Mary's bosom swelled with strange thoughts—tears gathered in her eyes, and she raised the ring that had been the token of her father's deliverance to her lips.

"Oh, sir," said the Covenanter, "pardon the freedom o' a plain blunt man, and o' ane whose bosom is burning wi' anxiety;—but there is a mystery, there is *something* attending my deliverance, an' the letter, and your kindness, that I canna see through—and I hope, and I fear—and I canna—I *daurna* comprehend how it is!—but, as it were, the past—the lang bygane past, and the present, appear to hae met thegither! It is makin' my head dizzy wi' wonder, for there seems in a' this a something that concerns you, and that concerns me, and *one* that I mayna name."

"Your perplexity," said Sir Frederic, "may be best relieved, by stating to you, in a few words, one or two circumstances of my history. Having, from family affliction, left this country, until within these four years, I held a commission in the army of the Prince of Orange. I was present at the battle of Seneff; it was my last engagement; and in the regiment which I commanded, there was a young Scottish volunteer, to whose bravery, during the battle, I owed my life. In admiration and gratitude for his conduct, I sent for him after the victory, to present him to the prince. He came. I questioned him respecting his birth and his family. He was silent—he burst into tears. I urged him to speak. He said, of his real name he knew nothing—of his family he knew nothing—all that he knew, was, that he had been the adopted son of a good and a Christian man, who had found him on Philiphaugh, on the lifeless bosom of his mother!"

"Merciful Heaven! my puir, injured Philip!" exclaimed the aged Covenanter, wringing his hands.

"My brother!" cried Daniel, eagerly. Mary wept.

"Oh, sir!" continued Sir Frederic, "words cannot paint my feelings as he spoke! I had been at the battle of Philiphaugh! and, not dreaming that a conflict was at hand, my beloved wife, with our infant boy, my little Edward, had joined me but the day before. At the first noise of Lesly's onset, I rushed from our tent—I left my loved ones there!—Our army was stricken with confusion—I never beheld them again! I grasped the hand of the youth—I gazed in his face as though my soul would have leaped from my eyelids. 'Do not deceive me!' I cried; and he drew from his bosom the ring and the bracelets of my Elizabeth!"

Here the old knight paused and wept, and tears ran down the cheeks of John Brydone, and the cheeks of his children.

They had not been many days in Westmoreland, and they were seated around the hospitable hearth of the good knight in peace, when two horsemen arrived at the door.

"It is our friend, Mr Duncan, and a stranger!" said the Covenanter, as he beheld them from the window.

"They are welcome—for your sake, they are welcome," said Sir Frederic; and while he yet spoke, the strangers entered. "My son, my son!" he continued, and hurried forward to meet him.

"Say also your *daughter*!" said Edward Mowbray, as he approached towards Mary, and pressed her to his breast.

"Philip!—my own Philip!" exclaimed Mary, and speech failed her.

"My brother!" said Daniel. "He was dead and is alive again—he was lost and is found," exclaimed John. "O Philip, man! do ye forgi'e me?"

The adopted son pressed the hand of his foster-father.

"It is enough," replied the Covenanter.

"Yes, he forgives you!" exclaimed Mr Duncan; "and he he has forgiven me. When we were in prison and in bonds waiting for death, he risked his life to deliver us, and he did deliver us; and a second time he has rescued me from the sword of the destroyer, and from the power of the men who thirsted for my blood. He is no enemy o' the Covenant—he is the defender o' the persecuted; and the blessing o Andrew Duncan is all he can bequeath, for a life twice saved, upon his deliverer, and Mary Brydone."

Need we say that Mary bestowed her hand upon Edward Mowbray; but, in the fondness of her heart she still called him "her Philip!"

THE SISTERS.

A TALE FOR THE LADIES.

There is not a period of deeper luxury and delight than the season when the nightingale raises its charmed voice to welcome the pleiades, and the glorious spring, like the spirit of life riding upon sunbeams, breathes upon the earth. Yielding to its renewing influence, the feelings and the fancies of youth rush back upon our heart, in all their holiness, freshness, and exultation; and we feel ourselves a deathless part of the joyous creation, which is glowing around us in beauty, beneath the smile of its God! Who has seen the foliage of ten thousand trees bursting into leaves, each kissed by a dew drop;—who has beheld a hundred flowers of varied hues, expanding into loveliness, stealing their colours from the rainbowed majesty of the morning sun;—who has listened to melody from the yellow furze;—to music from every bush;—heard

"The birds sing love on every spray,"

and gazed on the blue sky of his own beautiful land, swimming like a singing sea around the sun!—who has seen who has heard these, and not been ready to kneel upon the soil that gave him birth? Who has not then, as all nature lived and breathed, and shouted their hymns of glory around him, held his breath in quivering delight, and *felt* the presence of his own immortality, the assurance of his soul's eternal duration, and wondered that sin should exist upon a world so beautiful. But this moralizing keeps us from our narrative. On one of the most lovely mornings of the season we have mentioned, several glad groups were seen tripping lightly towards the cottage of Peggy Johnstone Peggy was the widow of a Border farmer, who died young, but left her, as the phrase runs, well to do in the world. She had two daughters, both in the pride of their young womanhood, and the sun shone not on a lovelier pair; both were graceful as the lilies that bowed their heads to the brook which ran near their cottage door, and both were mild, modest, and retiring, as the wee primrose that peeped forth beside the threshold. Both were that morning, by the consent of their mother, to bestow their hands upon the objects of their young affections. But we will not dwell upon their bridal; only a few short months were passed, when their mother was summoned into the world where the weary are at rest. On her deathbed she divided unto them equal portions, consisting of a few hundreds. Their mourning for her loss, which, for a time, was mingled with bitterness, gradually passed away, and long years of happiness appeared to welcome them, from the bosom of futu-

rity The husbands of both were in business, and resided in a market-town in Cumberland. The sisters' names were Helen and Margaret; and, if a preference could have been given, Margaret was the most lovely and gentle of the two. But before the tree that sheltered her hopes had time to blossom, the serpent gnawed its roots, and it withered like the gourd of the angry prophet. Her dark eyes lost their lustre, and the tears ran down her cheeks where the roses had perished for ever. She spoke, but there was none to answer her;—she sighed, but there was no comforter, save the mournful voice of echo. Her young husband sat carousing in the midst of his boon companions—where the thought of a wife or of home never enters—and night following night beheld them reel forth into the streets to finish their debauch in a house of shame!

Such were the miserable midnights of Margaret the beautiful and meek, while Helen beheld every day increasing her felicity in the care and affection of her temperate husband. She was the world to him, and he all that that world contained to her. And often as gloaming fell grey around them, still would they

> "Sit and look into each other's eyes,
> Silent and happy, as if God had given
> Nought else worth looking at on this side heaven!"

A few years passed over them. But hope visited not the dwelling of poor Margaret. Her husband had sunk into the habitual drunkard; and, not following his business, his business had ceased to follow him, and his substance was become a wreck. And she, so late the fairest of the fair, was now a dejected and broken-hearted mother, herself and her children in rags, a prey to filthiness and disease, sitting in a miserable hovel, stripped alike of furniture and the necessaries of life, where the wind and the rain whistled and drifted through the broken windows. To her each day the sun shone upon misery, while her children were crying around her for bread, and quarrelling with each other; and she now weeping in the midst of them, and now cursing the wretched man to whom they owed their being. Daily did the drunkard reel from his haunt of debauchery into his den of wretchedness. Then did the stricken children crouch behind their miserable mother for protection, as his red eyes glared upon their famished cheeks. But she now met his rage with the silent scowl of heart-broken and callous defiance, which, tending but to inflame the infuriated madman, then! then burst forth the more than fiendish clamour of domestic war! and then was heard upon the street the children's shriek—the screams and the bitter revilings of the long patient wife—with the cruel imprecations and unnatural blasphemies of the monster, for whom language has no name!—as he rushed forward, (putting *cowardice* to the blush,) and with his clenched hand struck to the ground, amidst the children she bore him, the once gentle and beautiful being he had sworn before God to protect!—she, whom once he would not permit

> "The winds of heaven to visit her cheeks too roughly"—

she, who would have thought her life cheap to have laid it down in his service, he kicked from him like a disobedient dog! These are the every-day changes of drinking habitually—these are the transformations of intemperance.

Turn we now to the fireside of the happier Helen!—The business of the day is done, and her sober husband returns homeward, and he perceives his fair children eagerly waiting his approach, while delight beams from his eyes, contentment plays upon his lips, and he stretches out his hand to welcome them; while

> "The expectin' wee things toddlin' stacher through
> To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise an' glee.
> His wee bit ingle blinkin' bonnily—
> His clean hearth-stane and thrifty wifie's smile
> Does a' his weary carkin' cares beguile,
> An' maks him quite forget his labour and his toil."

And, while the younglings climbed his knees, "the envied kiss to share," the elder brothers and sisters thronged around him, eager to repeat their daily and Sabbath-school tasks, and obtain, as their reward, the fond pressure of a father's hand, and behold exultation and affection sparkling from his eyes; while the happy mother sat by, plying her needle and

> "Gauring auld claes look amaist as weel's the new,"

and gazed upon the scene before her with a rapture none but mothers know. Here there was no crying or wailing for food—no quarrellings—no blasphemies; but, the cheerful supper done, the voice of Psalms was heard in solemn sounds—the book of God was opened—the father knelt, and his children bent their knees around him. And could an angel gaze upon a more delightful scene, than an infant kneeling by the side of its mother, gazing in her face, and lisping *Amen!* as the words fell from its father's lips, Surely, surely, as he flew to register it in heaven, a prayer! hearing God would respond—So let it be.

Again must we view the opposite picture. The unhappy drunkard, deprived of the means of life in his native town, wandered with his family to Edinburgh. But on him no reformation dawned. And the wretched Margaret, hurried onward by despair, before the smoothness of youth had left the brow of her sister, was overtaken by age, its wrinkles, and infirmities. And all the affections, all the feelings of her once gentle nature, being seared by long years of insult misery, brutality, and neglect, she herself flew to the bottle, and became tenfold more the victim of depravity than her fallen, abandoned husband. She lived to behold her children break the laws of their country, and to be utterly forsaken by her husband; and, in the depth of her misery, she was seen quarrelling with a dog upon the street, for a bare bone that had been cast out with the ashes.* Of the extent of her sufferings, or where to find her, her sister knew not; but in the midst of a severe winter, the once beautiful Margaret Johnstone was found a hideous and a frozen corpse in a miserable cellar.

> "Last scene of all,
> Which ends this strange eventful history:"

Upon Helen and her husband, age descended imperceptibly as the calm twilight of a lovely evening, when the stars steal out, and the sunbeams die away, as a holy stillness glides through the air, like the soft breathings of an angel unfolding from his celestial wings the silken curtains of a summer night; and the conscious earth, kissed by the balmy spirit, dreams and smiles, and, smiling, dreams itself into the arms of night and of repose. Fourscore winters passed over them Their heads became white with the "snow of years." But they became old together. They half forgot the likeness of the face of their youth; but still the heart of youth, with its imperishable affections and esteem, throbbed in either bosom, smiling calmly upon time and its ravages; and still, in the eyes of the happy old man, his silver-haired partner seemed as young, as fair, and as beautiful, as when, in the noontide of her loveliness, she blushed to him her vows Their children have risen around them, and called them blessed; and they have beheld those children esteemed and honoured in society.

* A fact.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE FIRST-FOOT.

NOTWITHSTANDING the shortness of their days, the bitterness of their frosts, and the fury of their storms, December and January are merry months. First comes old Christmas, shaking his hoary locks, belike, in the shape of snow-drift, and laughing, well-pleased, beneath his crown of misletoe, over the smoking soirloin and the savoury goose. There is not a child on the south side of the Borders, who longs not for the coming of merry Christmas—it is their holiday of holidays—their season of play and of presents—and old and young shake hands with Christmas, and with each other. And even on the northern side of "the river," and "the ideal line by fancy drawn," which "divide the sister kingdoms," there are thousands who welcome and forget not "blithe Yule day." Next comes the New Year—the bottle, the hot pint, and the *first-foot*—and we might notice, also, Hansel Monday, and "Auld Hansel Monanday," which follow in their wake, and keep up the merriment till the back of January is broken. But our business, at present, is with the *first-foot*, and we must hold. It matters not on what side of the Borders it may be—and northward the feeling extends far beyond the Border—there is a mysterious, an ominous importance attached to the individual who first crosses the threshold, after the clock has struck twelve at midnight, on the 31st of December, or who is the *first-foot* in a house after the New Year has begun. The *first-foot* stamps the "luck" of the house—the good fortune or the evil fortune of its inmates throughout the year! But to begin with our story. There was not a person on all the Borders, nor yet in all Scotland, who attached more importance to the first-foot, than Nelly Rogers. Nelly was a very worthy, kind-hearted, yea, even sensible sort of woman, but a vein of superstition ran through her sense; she had imbibed a variety of "auld warld notions" in infancy, and, as she grew up, they became a part of her creed. She did not exactly believe that ghosts and apparitions existed in her day, but she was perfectly sure they *had* existed, and *had* been seen; she was sure, also, there was something in dreams, and she was positive there was a great deal in the luckiness or unluckiness of a first-foot; she had remarked it in her own experience thirty times, and, she said, "it was of nae use attempting to argue her out o' what she had observed hersel." Nelly was the wife of one Richard Rogers, a respectable farmer, whose farm-house stood by the side of the post-road, between Kelso and Lauder. They had a family of several children; but our business is with the oldest, who was called George, and who had the misfortune to receive, both from his parents and their neighbours, the character of being *a genius*. This is a very unfortunate character to give to any one who has a fortune to make in the world, as will be seen when we come to notice the history of George the Genius—for such was the appellation by which he was familiarly mentioned. Now, it was the last night of the old year—George was about twelve years of age, and, because he was their first-born, and, moreover, because he was a genius, he was permitted to sit with his father and his mother, and a few friends, who had come to visit them, to see the old year out, and the New Year in. The cuckoo clock struck twelve, and the company rose—shook hands—wished each other a happy new year, and, in a bumper, drank, "May the year that's awa be the warst o' our lives."

"I wonder wha will be our first-foot," said Nelly, "I hope it will be a lucky ane." The company began to argue whether there was anything in the luck of a first-foot or not and the young genius sided with his mother; and, while they yet disputed upon the subject, a knocking was heard at the front door.

"There's somebody," said Nelly; "if it's onybody that I think's no luck, I winna let them in."

"Nonsense!" said Richard.

"It's nae nonsense," replied Nelly; "it may be a *flat-soled* body, for onything I ken; and do ye think I wad risk the like o' that. Haud awa, see wha it is, George," added she, addressing the genius; "and dinna let them in unless you're sure that they dinna come empty-handed."

"Did ever ye hear the like o' the woman!" said her husband; "sic havers! Run awa, George, hinny; open the door."

The boy ran to the door, and inquired—"Who's there?"

"A stranger," was the reply.

"What do ye want?" inquired the genius, with a degree of caution seldom found in persons honoured with such an epithet.

"I have a letter to Master Rogers, from his brother," answered the stranger.

"A letter frae my brother, John!" cried Richard, starting from his seat; "open the door, laddie—open the door."

Now, Richard Rogers had a brother, who also had been considered a sort of a genius in his youth. He was of a wild and restless disposition in those days, and his acquaintances were wont to call him by the name of Jack the Rambler. But it is a long road that has no turning—he had now been many years at sea—was the captain of a free-trader—and as remarkable for his steadiness and worldly wisdom, as he had been noted for the wildness of his youth. There was a mysterious spot in the captain's history, which even his brother Richard had never been able to unriddle. But that spot will be brought to light by and by.

George opened the door, and the stranger entered. He was dressed as a seaman; and Nelly drew back and appeared troubled as her eyes fell upon him. It was evident she had set him down in her mind as an unlucky first-foot. He was not, indeed, the most comely personage that one might desire to look upon on a New Year's morning; for he was a squat little fellow, with huge red whiskers that almost buried his face, his burly head was covered with a sou-wester, and his eyes squinted most fearfully. Nelly could not withdraw her eyes from the man's eyes—she contemplated the

squint with horror! Such eyes were never in the head of a first-foot before! She was sure that "something no canny would be the upshot."

'Tak a seat, sir—tak a seat, sir," said Richard, addressing the sailor; "fill out a glass, and mak yoursel at hame Nelly, bring a clean tumbler. And ye hae a letter frae my brother, the captain, sir," added he, anxiously; "how is he?—where is he?—when did ye see him?"

"I left him at Liverpool, sir," replied the queer-looking sailor; "and, as I intended to take a run down overland to Leith to see my old mother, 'Bill,' says he to me—(for my name's Bill, sir—Bill Somers)—well, as I'm saying, 'Bill,' says he, 'you'll be going past the door of a brother of mine, and I wish I were going with you'—(and I wish he had, for, not to say it before you, sir, there an't a better or a cleverer fellow than Captain Rogers, in the whole service—nor a luckier one either, though, poor fellow, he has had his bad luck too in some things; and it sticks to him still, and will stick to him)—however, as I say, said he to me—'Bill, here is a bit of a letter, give it to my brother—it concerns my nevy, George'—(yes, George, I think he called him.) So I took the letter and set off—that is, some days ago—and I arrived at the public-house, a little from this, about four hours since, and intended to cast anchor there for the night; but having taken a glass or two, by way of ballast, I found myself in good sailing-trim, and, having inquired about you, and finding that you lived but a short way off, and that the people in the house said, it being New Year's times, you wouldn't be moored yet, I desired the landlady to fill me up half a gallon, or so, of her best rum, that I mightn't come empty-handed—for that wouldn't be lucky, ma'am, I reckon," added he, squinting in the face of Mrs Rogers, who looked now at his eyes, and now at a large bottle, which he drew from beneath a sort of half greatcoat or monkey-jacket. Nelly was no friend to spirit-drinking; nevertheless she was glad that her first-foot, though he did squint, had not come empty-handed.

The letter was handed to Mr Rogers, who, having broke the seal—"Preserve us, Richard!" said Nelly, "that's a lang epistle! I daresay the captain's made his will in't—what does he say?"

"It's a kind, sensible, weel-written letter," said Richard, "for John was a genius a' his days; and there is nair about a will in't than ye're aware o'. But there's nae secret in it. George will read it."

The letter was then given to the genius, who read as follows:—

"Dear Dick—As one of my crew, Bill Somers, who has sailed with me for a dozen years, is going down to Scotland, and will pass your way, I take the opportunity of writing to you, and letting you know that I am as well as a person, who has as much cause to be unhappy as I have, can desire to be. The cause of that unhappiness you don't know, and few know it—but I do, and that's enough. I have made some money—perhaps a good deal—but that's of no consequence. I once thought that I might have *them* of my own flesh and blood to inherit it; however, that was not to be. It is a long story, and a sad story—one that you know nothing about, and which it is of no use to tell you about now. As things are, my nevy, George, is to be heir to whatever money, goods, and chattels I possess."

As her son read this, Nelly thought that it was nonsense, after all, to say that a squint first-foot was unlucky.

"Read on, George," said his father, "and take heed to what your uncle says."

The boy resumed the letter, and again read—

"Now, as my nevy is to be my heir, I think it my duty to lay down a sort of chart—or call it what you like—by which I would wish him to shape his future conduct. I am glad to hear that his head is of the right sort; but let us have none of your fiddle ornaments about it. A lofty prow is not always the best for a storm, and looks bad enough with a Dutch stern. Beware, also, how you let him to sea before his vessel is fairly rigged, caulked, and waterproof—or, if you do, then look out for his growing top-heavy, and capsizing in the turn of a handspike. If you set him off with a bare allowance of ballast, and without a single letter of credit—do you expect him to bring home a cargo? It is stuff, Dick—arrant stuff! All your boy exhibitions are downright swindling. Prodigies, forsooth!—why, parrots can speak, and jackdaws chatter. Or, to render myself intelligible to your agricultural senses, a tree blossoms in its first year, and a selfish deluded idiot plucks it up, exhibits it in the market-place—the bud perishes, and the tree withers, while gaping lubbers wonder that it did not bear fruit! Now, Dick, this is exactly the case with all your fast-sailing miracles. Give a boy the helm, and get him to the drudgery of the cabin again, if you can.

"As to his love affairs, provided the girl of his choice be virtuous, and tolerably pretty—though neither very rich nor very intelligent—see that you don't strike off at a tangent, and, like one of your own stupid cattle, run counter to his will. If you do, it will only hasten what you wish to prevent—or render a marriage certain, which the young couple thought sufficiently doubtful. Besides, your opposition might spoil a poor girl's reputation; and I have always found that imputations, of a certain class, upon a man, are like marks left upon the sand within a tide-mark; but to a woman—a lovely, helpless woman—they adhere like a limpit to the rock. Besides this, Dick, I am certain the most powerful impression of moral rectitude you can imprint upon his heart, will be like a pistol fired from a cock-boat, compared to the glorious and irresistible broadside of a seventy-four, when you contrast its influence upon his actions, with the delightful and conquering emotions of love and esteem which he entertains for an amiable woman. Don't preach to me, Dick, for I know when the devil, the world, and the flesh, war against our better principles, and when early instructions, counsels, and all those sort of things, are fairly run down and drop astern. Why, if a fellow just think for a moment of the beautiful being, whose soul is as pure as the blue sea on a summer day—if he just think of her—or of her last words—'*Don't forget me!*'—Belay! is the word—about goes the helm—head round from the lee-shore of inconsistency, and he is again quietly moored in the fair-way of virtue.

"When he begins to shape into manhood, *Discretion* is the watchword; and whatever he or others may think of his abilities, let him douse *Presumption* and stow it below, hoist a *desire to please* at the fore-top, place *Perseverance* at the helm, and *Civility* and *Moderate Ambition* upon the watch. People say they like a plain-spoken, honest fellow, who says what he thinks. But it is all a fudge. Just speak in the jack-blunt manner, which they praise, respecting themselves, and, mark me, they will march off to another tune. Let any man practise this for a time, and he will soon be hated by every soul on board. I don't mean to advise dissimulation, but a man can get enemies enough without making them; therefore, where he has no good to say of a person, though they may have injured him, let him hold his tongue.

"Another thing, and an important one, for him to remember, is—he who is the king of good-fellows, and a 'good soul' amongst his associates, is styled by the public a thoughtless man, and by his enemies a drunkard. Now, Dick, in the world of business, a *good fellow* simply means a *good-for-nothing*. Therefore, see to it, and put my nevy on the look-out; for, not to speak of the growing influence of habit, just attribute unsteadiness to a man, and you bring him a wind a-head—stop his credit, and hurl him to ruin headlong. Sobriety is his compass—sobriety is his passport.

"Again, Dick, I would neither wish to see him a booby nor a mawworm; but I must tell you that the opinion the world forms of us is often cast upon very trivial circumstances. A heedlessly committed action, which we forget in half an hour, others will remember to our disadvantage for twelve months. There is nothing like being well-braced with circumspection; let him always look well to his bearing and distance, or he will soon find himself out in his latitude. No man of any ambition, or whether he was ambitious or not, ever loved a man who presumed to be in all things wiser than himself. I don't wish to lecture upon humbug humility, but diffidence and good-breeding should never be under the poop. Let him take heed, also, how he dabbles in politics or religion. Both concern him, and he must think and act upon both; but he must do so as becomes a man. I hate all your noisy boatswain politicians, both aboard the Commons and out of it. The moment I see a lubberly fellow swinging his arms about and blowing a hurricane, whether he be endeavouring to blow a nation or a tavern in agitation—there rages a grand rascal, say I; his patriotism, and the froth which he scatters from his mouth, are of a piece. Now, as to his religious principles, of all things, let him keep them to himself. Every man is as much in the right, in his own estimation, as he is. Nothing will procure a man more enemies than a real or affected singularity in matters of religion. For though there is a great deal of good sense afloat in the world, yet there is such a fry of feverish, canting, small craft, always skulking about, and peeping into our *pees* and *ques*, which, though they cannot sink your character, they annoy it with their sparrow-hail. In a word, Dick, every intelligent being's religion lies between his own conscience and his Maker. Give my nevy a Bible, with a father's best blessing—in it he will find the ennobling hopes of eternity, and learn to do unto others as he would wish others to do unto him; and this from the bottom of my heart, is the advice of his uncle Jack.

"A sterling, upright, moral character, is absolutely indispensable. If the heart be well-built, and kept in good sailing-trim, he will have a tell-tale there which will keep all right aloft. As well set a seaman upon a voyage of discovery without a compass, as a young fellow upon the world without a character. But, d'ye see, because you can't go to sea without a compass of this kind, you are not to expect that, in all cases it will insure you of reaching the Pole. No, Dick, it is rather like a pilot sent out to steer you in, when you are with sight of land, and without whose assistance you cannot reach the port

"In conversation, too, I hate to see a smooth-water puppy running at the rate of twelve knots, as if no vessel in the fleet could sail but his own. I have seen fellows of this sort, shewing off like gilded pinnaces at a regatta, while they were only shewing how little they had on board. Two things, in particular, I wish my nevy to avoid—namely, argufying in company and speaking about himself. There is a time and a place

for everything; and, though argument be well enough in its way, he who is always upon the look-out for one, is just as sure as he finds it, to find an enemy; and, as to speaking of one's self, independent of its ill-breeding, it is like a dose of salt-water served round the company. The grand secret of conversation is, to say little in a way to please, and the moment you fail do so, it is time to shove your boat off. Whenever you see a person yawn in your company, take your hat.

"Independent of these things, let him look well to his tide-table. Without punctuality, the best character becomes a bad one. The moment a man breaks his word, or becomes indifferent to his engagement, why, the confidence of his commodore is at an end; and, instead of being promoted to the quarter-deck, he may slave before the mast till the boatswain's last whistle pipe all hands to his funeral. Punctuality, Dick—systematical, methodical punctuality—is a fortune to a fellow ready made. Let him once listen to the syren voice of delay—neglect to weigh anchor with the tide, and if he don't drift back with the current, go to pieces on a sand-bank, or be blown to sticks by a foul wind, my name's not Jack. Let him keep a sharp eye upon the beginning, the middle, and the end of everything he undertakes. He must not tack about, like a fellow on a cruise or a roving commission, but, whatever wind blows, maintain a straight course, keeping his head to the port. Burns, the poet, spoke like a philosopher, when he said it was the misfortune of his life to be without an aim. But I tell you what, Dick, we must not only have an object to steer to, but it must be a reasonable object. A madman may say he is determined to go to the North Pole, or the moon—but that's not the thing, Dick; our anticipations must be likelihoods, our ambitions probabilities; and when we have made frequent calculations, and find ourselves correct in our reckoning, though we have made but little way, then down with despondency, and stick to perseverance. I don't mean a beggarly, servile, grovelling perseverance, but the unsubdued determination of an unconquerable spirit, riding out the storm, and while small craft sink on every side, disdaining to take in a single reef.

"Now, having said thus much about shaping his course and laying in a freight, it is material that I drop a concluding word with regard to his rigging. Send him out with patched canvass, and the veriest punt that ever disgraced the water will clear out before him. A patch upon his coat will be an embargo on his prospects. People affect to despise tailors; but it is base ingratitude or shallow dissimulation. Not that I would for the world see my nevy an insignificant dandy, but remember the moment the elbows of your coat open, every door shuts.

"But my fingers are cramped with this long epistle, and, moreover, the paper is full; and with love to nevy George, to Nelly, and the little ones, I am, dear Dick,

"Your affectionate Brother,

"JOHN ROGERS,

"Otherwise

"JACK THE RAMBLER."

All applauded this letter when they had heard it, and they vowed the captain was a clever fellow—a noble fellow—ay, and a wise one; and they drank his health and a happy New Year to him, though half of what he had written, from his nautical types and symbols, was as Greek and Latin unto those who heard it, and worse unto George the genius, who read it; though some parts of it all understood.

When the health of Captain Rogers had gone round, "I wonder in the world," said Richard, "what it can be that my brother aye refers to about being unhappy? I've written to him fifty times to try to fathom it, but I never could—he never would gie me ony satisfaction."

"Why," said the seaman, as he sat leaning forward and turning round his sou-wester between his knees, "I believe I know—or I can guess a something about the matter. It's about ten years ago, according to my reckoning, we were coming down the Mediterranean—the captain was as fine a looking young fellow then as ever stood upon a deck. Well, as I was saying, we were coming down the Mediterranean, and at Genoa we took a gentleman and his daughter on board. She was a pretty creature; I've seen nothing like her neither before nor since. So, as I'm telling you, we took them on board at Genoa, for England, and they had not been many days on board, till every one saw, and I saw—though my eyes are none o' the smartest—that the captain could look on nothing but his lovely passenger. It wasn't hard to see that she looked much in the same way at him, and I have seen them walking on the deck at night with her arm through his, in the moonlight; and, let me tell you, a glorious sight it is—moonlight on the Mediterranean! It is enough to make a man fall in love with moonlight itself, if there be nothing else beside him. Well, d'ye see, as I am saying, it wasn't long until the old gentleman, her father, saw which way the land lay; and one day we heard the lady weeping; she never came out of her cabin during the rest of the voyage, nor did her father again speak to the master. We were laid up for a long time, and there was a report that the captain and her had got married, unknown to her father. However, we sailed on a long voyage; we weren't back to England again for more than twelve months; but the day after we landed, the captain shut himself up, and, for long and long, we used to find him sitting with the salt water in his eyes. We again heard the report that he had been married, and also that his lady had died in childbed; but whether the child was living or ever was living, or whether it was a boy or a girl, we didn't know; nor did he know; and, I believe, he never was able to hear any more about the old gentleman—so, as I say, that's all I know about the matter, poor fellow."

Now, the squinting sailor remained two days in the house of Richard Rogers, and he was such a comical man, and such a good-natured kind-hearted man, that Mrs Rogers was certain he would be a lucky first-foot, even though he had a very unfortunate cross look with his eyes; and she was the more convinced in this opinion, because, in a conversation she had had with him, and in which she had inquired—"What siller he thought the captain might be worth? "Why, I'm saying," answered the sailor, "Captain Rogers is worth a round twenty thousand, if he be worth a single penny;—and that, I'm thinking, is a pretty comfortable thing for Master George to be heir to!" "Ay, and so it is," responded Nelly. And there was no longer anything disagreeable in the sailor's squint.

Well, week followed week, and month succeeded month—spring came, and summer came, and harvest followed; and it was altogether a lucky year to Richard Rogers. Nelly declared that the squinting sailor had been an excellent first-foot.

Another year came, another, and another, until eight years passed round since they had been visited by the outlandish seaman. Nelly had had both lucky and unlucky first-feet. George the genius was now a lad of twenty, and the other children were well grown—but George was still a genius, and nothing but a genius. He was indeed a good scholar—a grand scholar, as his mother declared—and a great one, as his father affirmed. He had been brought up to no profession, for it was of no use thinking of a profession for one who was heir to twenty thousand pounds; and, at any rate, his genius was sure to make him a fortune. In what way his genius was to do this, was never taken into consideration. Many people said, "If we had your genius, George, we could make a fortune." And George thought he would and could. The joiner in the next village, however, said, that "Wi'a' George's genius, he didna believe he could make an elshin heft, and stick him!—and, in his opinion, there was mair to be made by making elshin-hefts than by writing ballants!"

As I have said, eight years had passed; it was again the last night of the old year, and a very dark and stormy night it was. Mr Rogers, his wife, their son George, and the rest of their family, had again seen the old year out and the new year in, and exchanged with each other the compliments of the season, when the cuckoo-clock again announced the hour of twelve. Nelly had "*happed* up the fire" with her own hands—a thing that she always did on the last night of the old year, that it might not be out on a New Year's morning. She was again wondering who would be their first-foot, and expressing a hope that it would be a lucky one, when a chaise drew up before the house, and the driver, dismounting and knocking at the window, begged that they would favour him with a light, as the roads were exceedingly dark, and the lamps of the chaise had been blown out by the wind.

"A light!" exclaimed Betty, half petrified at they

request; "preserve us! is the man beside himsel!—do ye imagine that onybody is gaun to gie ye out a light the first thing in a New Year's morning! Gae awa!—gae awa!"

In vain the driver expostulated—he had met with similar treatment at other houses at which he had called. "Ye hae nae business to travel at siccan a time o' night," replied Betty, to all his arguments. Her husband said little, for he entertained some of his wife's scruples against giving a light at such a time. George mildly ridiculed the absurdity of the refusal; but—"I am mistress o' my ain house," answered his mother, "and I'll gie a light out o't when I please, and only when I please. Wi' a' yer learnin', George, ye wad be a great fool sometimes."

The voice of a lady was now heard at the window with the driver, saying—"Pray, good people, do permit us to light the lamps, and you shall have any recompense." No sooner did George hear the lady's voice, than, in despite of his mother's frowns, he sprang to the door and unlocked it. With an awkward sort of gallantry he ushered in the fair stranger. She was, indeed, the loveliest first-foot that had ever crossed the threshold of Mrs Rogers. She had no sooner entered, than Nelly saw and felt this, and, with a civility which formed a strange contrast to her answers to the driver, she smoothed down for her the cushioned arm-chair by the side of the fire. The young lady (for she hardly appeared to exceed seventeen) politely declined the proffered hospitality. "Sit down, my sweet young leddy; now, do sit down just to oblige me," said Nelly. "Ye are our first-foot, and I hope—I'm sure ye'll be a lucky ane; and ye wadna, ye canna gaun' out without tasting wi' us on a New Year's morning."

The young lady sat down; and Nelly hastened to spread upon the table little mountains of short bread, (of which she was a notable maker,) with her spice-loaf, milk-scones, and her best ewe-cheese, and her cream-cheese, which was quite a fancy! And while his mother was so occupied, George produced three or four sorts of home-made wine of his own manufacture; for, in his catalogue of capabilities as a genius, it must be admitted that he had some which might be said to belong to the useful.

"Now, make yoursel at hame, my dear leddy," said Nelly; "need nae pressing. Or if ye wad like it better, I'll get ye ready a cup o' tea in a minute or twa; the kettle's boiling; and it's only to mask, so dinna say no. Indeed, if ye'll only consent to stop a' night, ye shall hae the best bed in the house, and we'll put the horses in the stable; for it's no owre and aboon lucky to gie or tak a light on a New Year's morning."

A faint smile played across the lips of the fair stranger, at the mixture of Nelly's kindness and credulity; and she thanked her for her hospitality, but stated that she must proceed on her journey, as she was hastening to the death-bed of a near and only relative. The young lady, however, sat longer than she wist, for she had entered in conversation with George—how, she knew not, and he knew not; but they were pleased with each other; and there were times (though it was only at times) that George could talk like an inspired being; and this was one of those times. The knowledge, the youth, the beauty of the lovely stranger, had kindled all the fires of his genius within him. Even his father was surprised, and his mother forgot that the chaise-driver was lighting the lamps; and how long the fair lady might have listened to George, we cannot tell, had not the driver hinted, "All's ready, Ma'am; the horses will get no good in the cold." She arose and took leave of her entertainers; and George accompanied her to the chaise, and shook her hand and bade her farewell, as though she had been an old and a very dear friend. He even thought, as she replied, "*Farewell,*" that there was a sadness in her tone, as if she were sorry to say it.

Richard and his spouse retired to rest; but still the thought of having given a light out of her house on a New Year's morning troubled her, and she feared that, after all, her lovely first-foot would prove an unlucky one. George laid his head upon his pillow to dream dreams, and conjure up visions of the fair stranger.

A short week had not passed, however—Richard was returning from Kelso market, the roads were literally a sheet of ice—it is said that bones are most easily broken in frosty weather—his horse fell and rolled over him, and he was carried home bruised, and with his leg broken. Nelly was loud in her lamentations, and yet louder in her upbraidings, against George and against herself, that she permitted a light to be carried out of her house on a New Year's morning. "It was born in upon me," said she, "the leddy wadna be lucky, that something would come out o' the gien the light!" But this was not all; before two months elapsed, and just as her husband was beginning to set his foot to the ground again, from friction and negligence together, the thrashing machine took fire. It was still a severe frost, there was scarce a drop of water to be procured about the place, and, in spite of the exertions of all the people on the farm, and their neighbours who came to their assistance, the fierce flames roared, spread and rushed from stack to stack, until the barn, the stables, the stack-yard, and the dwelling-house, presented a heap of smoldering ashes and smoking ruins. Yet this was not the worst evil which had that day fallen upon Richard Rogers. He was one of those individuals who have an aversion to the very name of a bank, and he had the savings and the profits of twenty years—in fifty pound notes, and in five pound notes, and crown pieces—locked away in a strong drawer in his bedroom. In the confusion of the fire, and as he bustled, halting about, with the hope of saving some of his wheat-stacks, (for wheat was selling high at the time,) he forgot the strong drawer and his twenty years' savings, until flames were seen bursting from the window of his bedroom. The window had been left open, and some of the burning materials having been blown into the room, it was the first part of the house which caught fire.

"Oh! I'm ruined!—I'm ruined!" cried Richard; "my siller!—my siller!—my hard won siller!"

A rush was made to the bedroom; but before they reached it, the stairs gave way, the floor fell in, and a thick flame and suffocating smoke buried the fruits of poor Richard's industry—the treasure which he had laid up for his children.

"Now, I am a beggar!" groaned he, lifting up his hands, while the flames almost scorched his face.

"Oh, black sorrow take that leddy!" cried Nelly, wringing her hands; "what tempted her to be my first-foot!—or what tempted me to gie her a light! George! George! it was a' you! We gied fire out o' the house, and now we've brought it about us! Waes me! waes me! I'm ruined woman! O Richard! what will we do! what was ye thinking about that ye didna mind the siller?"

Richard knew nothing of the number of his notes, and his riches had, indeed, vanished in a flash of fire! He was now obliged to take shelter with his family in an out-house, which had been occupied by a cotter. He had not heard from Captain Rogers for more than twelve months, and he knew not where he was, therefore he could expect no immediate assistance from him. It was now necessary that George should bring his genius into action—his father could no longer support him in idleness; and, as it had always been said, that he had only to exert his genius to make a fortune, George resolved that he would exert it, and he was pleased with the thought of setting his father on his feet again by the reward of his talents. He had read somewhere in the writings of Dr Johnson, (and the Doctor had a good deal of experience in the matter,) that "genius was *sure* to meet with its reward in London;" and, if the Doctor was *sure* of that, George was as *sure* that he was a genius, and therefore he considered the reward as certain. So George determined.

as his uncle might live many years, that he would go to London and make a fortune for himself, and to assist his father in the meantime. A cow was taken to Kelso market and sold for eight pounds, and the money was given to George to pay his expenses to the metropolis, and to keep him there until his genius should put him in the way of making the anticipated fortune. His coat was not exactly such a one as his uncle desired he should be sent out into the world in—not that it was positively a bad coat, but it was beginning to be rather smooth and clear about the elbows, a lighter shade ran up on each side of the seams at the back, and his hat was becoming bare round the edges on the crown. To be sure, as his mother said, "he would aye hae ink beside him, and a dip o' ink would help to hide that." These, however, were things that could not be mended—the wardrobe of the whole family had been consumed at the fire; but these things did not distress George, for he did not consider it necessary for a genius to appear in a new coat. There were many tears shed on both sides when George bade adieu to his father, his mother, and his brethren, and took his journey towards London.

It was about the middle of March when he arrived in the metropolis; and, having spent two days wandering about and wondering at all he saw, without once thinking how his genius was to make the long-talked-of fortune, on the third day he delivered a letter of introduction, which he had received, to a broker in the city. Now, it so happened, that in this letter poor George was spoken of as an "*extraordinary genius!*"

"So you are a *great genius,* young man, my friend informs me," said the broker; "what have you a genius for?"

George blushed and looked confused; he almost said—"for everything;" but he hung down his head and said nothing.

"Is it a genius for making machines—or playing the fiddle—or what?" added the broker.

George looked more and more confused; he replied—"that he could neither make machines, nor did he know anything of music."

"Then I hope it's not a genius for making ballads, is it?" continued the other.

"I have written ballads," answered George, hesitatingly.

"Oh, then you must try the west end—you wont do for the city," added the broker; "your genius is an article that's not in demand here."

George left the office of the London citizen mortified and humiliated. For a dozen long years everybody had told him he was a genius; and now, when the question was put to him—"What had he a genius for?" he could not answer it. This rebuff rendered him melancholy for several days, and he wandered from street to street, sometimes standing, unconscious of what he was doing, before the window of a bookseller, till, jostled by the crowd, he moved on, and again took his stand before the window of the printseller, the jeweller, or the vender of caricatures. Still he believed that he was a genius, and he was conscious that that genius might make him a fortune; only he knew not how to apply it—he was puzzled where to begin. Yet he did not despair. He thought the day would come—but how it was to come, he knew not. He took out his uncle's letter, which his father had put into his hands when he left him, and he read it again, and said, it was all very good, but what was he the better of it?—it was all very true—too true, for he understood every word of it now; and he turned round his arm and examined his coat with a sigh, and beheld that the lining was beginning to shew its unwelcome face through the seams of the elbows. I should have told you that he was then sitting in a coffee-house, sipping his three halfpence worth of coffee, and *kitchening* his pennyworth of bread, which was but half a slice, slightly buttered—and a thin slice, too, compared with those of his mother's cutting. He was beginning to feel one of the first rewards of genius—*eating by measure!* To divine the melancholy of his feelings, and the gloom of his prospects he took up a magazine which lay on the table before him. His eyes fell upon a review of a poem which had been lately published, and for which the author was said to have received a thousand guineas! "*A thousand guineas!*" exclaimed George, dropping the magazine—"*A thousand guineas!* I shall make a fortune yet!" He had read some of the extracts from the poem—he was sure he could write better lines—his eyes flashed with ecstasy—his very nostrils distended with delight—a thousand guineas seemed already in his pocket! Though, alas! out of the eight pounds which he had received as the price of his father's cow, with all his management and with all his economy, he had but eight shillings left. But his resolution was taken—he saw fortune hovering over him with her golden wings—he purchased a quire of paper and half a dozen quills, and hurried to his garret—for his lodging *was* a garret, in which there was nothing but an old bed and an olden chair—not even an apology for a table—but sometimes the bed served the purpose of one, and at other times he sat upon the floor like a Turk, and wrote upon the chair. He was resolved to write an epic—for the idea of a thousand guineas had taken possession of all his faculties. He made a pen—he folded the paper—he rubbed his hands across his brow for a subject. He might have said with Byron, (had Byron then said it,)

"I want a hero!"

He thought of a hundred subjects, and with each the idea of his mother's beautiful but most unlucky first-foot was mingled! At length he fixed upon one, and began to write. He wrote most industriously—in short, he wrote for a thousand guineas! He tasked himself to four hundred lines a day, and, in a fortnight, he finished a poem containing about five thousand. It was longer than that for which the thousand guineas had been given; but George thought, though he should get no more for his, that even a thousand guineas was very good payment for a fortnight's labour. Of the eight shillings which we mentioned his being in possession of when he began the epic, he had now but threepence, and he was in arrears for the week's rent of his garret. The landlady began to cast very suspicious glances at her lodger—she looked at him with the sides of her eyes. She did not know exactly what a genius meant, but she had proof positive it did not mean a gentleman. At times, also, she would stand with his garret-door in her hand, as if she intended to say—"Mr Rogers, I would thank you for last week's rent."

Scarce was the ink dry upon the last page of his poem, when George, folding up the manuscript, put it carefully into his coat pocket, and hurried to the bookseller of whom he had read that he had given a thousand guineas for a shorter work, and one too that, he was satisfied in his own mind was every way inferior to his. We do not say that he exactly expected the publisher to fall down and worship him the moment he read the first page of his production, but he did believe that he would regard him as a prodigy, and at once offer terms for the copyright. He was informed by a shopman, however, that the publisher was engaged, and he left the manuscript, stating that he would call again. George did call again, and yet again trembling with hope and anxiety; and he began to discover that a great London publisher was as difficult of access as his imperial mightiness the Emperor of China. At length, by accident, he found the Bibliopole in his shop. He gave a glance at George—it was a withering glance—a glance at his coat and at his elbows. The unfortunate genius remembered, when it was too late, the passage in his uncle's letter—"the moment the elbows of your coat open, every door shuts. We have already mentioned that the lining was beginning to peer through them, and, during the fervour of inspiration, or the *furo-*

of excitement in composing the epic, he had not observed that the rent had become greater, that the lining too had given way, and that now his linen (which was not of a snow colour) was visible. He inquired after his manuscript. "What is it?" asked the publisher.

"A poem," answered George—"an epic!" The man of books smiled—he gave another look at the forlorn visage of the genius—it was evident he measured the value of his poetry by the value of his coat. "A poem!" replied he—"poetry's a drug! It is of no use for such as you to think about writing poetry. Give the young man his manuscript," said he to the shopman, and walked away.

The reader may imagine the feelings of our disappointed genius—they were bitter as the human soul could bear. Yet he did not altogether despair; there were more booksellers in London. It is unnecessary to tell how he offered his manuscript to another and another, yea, to twenty more—how he examined what books they had published in their windows—and how he entered their shops with fear and trembling, for his hopes were becoming fainter and more faint. Some opened it, others did not, but all shook their heads and said—nobody would undertake to publish poetry, or that it was not in their way; some advised him to publish by subscription, but George Rogers did not know a soul in London; others recommended him to try the magazines. It was with a heavy heart that he abandoned the idea of publishing his epic, and with it also his fond dream of obtaining a thousand guineas. He had resolved within himself, that the moment he received the money, he would go down to Scotland and rebuild his father's house; and all who knew him should marvel and hold up their hands at the fame and the fortune of George the Genius. But a hungry man cannot indulge in day-dreams, and his visions by night are an aggravation of his misery; he therefore had to renounce the fond delusion, that he might have bread to eat. His last resource was to try the magazines. His epic was out of the question for them, and he wrote songs, odes, essays, and short tales, on every scrap of paper, and on the back of every letter in his possession. With this bundle of "shreds and patches," he waited upon several magazine publishers. One told him he was overstocked with contributions; another, that he might leave the papers, and he should have an answer in two or three weeks. But three weeks was an eternity to a man who had not tasted food for three days. A third said "he could seldom make room for new contributors—poetry was not an article for which he gave money—essays were at a discount, and he only published tales by writers of established reputation." There was one article however, which pleased him, and he handed George a guinea for it. The tears started into his eyes as he received it—he thought he would never be poor again—he was as proud of that guinea as if it had been a thousand! It convinced him more and more that he *was* a genius. I need not tell how that guinea was husbanded, and how it was doled out—but although George reckoned that it would purchase two hundred and fifty-two penny loaves—and that that was almost as many as a man need to eat in a twelvemonth—yet the guinea vanished to the last penny before a month went round

He had frequently called at the shop of his first patron, the publisher of the Magazine; and one day when he so called—"O Mr Rogers," said the bookseller "I have just heard of a little job which will suit you. Lord L—— wishes me to find him a person to write a pamphlet in defence of the war. You are just the person to do it. Make it pungent and peppery, and it will be five or ten guineas for you, and perhaps the patronage of his lordship—and you know no bookseller will look at genius without patronage."

A new light broke upon George—he discovered why his epic had been rejected. He hurried to his garret. He began the pamphlet with the eagerness of frenzy. It was both peppery and passionate. Before the afternoon of the following day it was completed, and he flew with it to the house of the nobleman. Our genius was hardly, as the reader may suppose, in a fitting garb for the drawing-room or library of a British peer, and the pampered menial who opened the door attempted to dash it back in his face. He however, neither lacked spirit or strength, and he forced his way into the lobby.

"Inform his lordship," said George, "that Mr Rogers has called with the pamphlet in Defence of the War!" And he spoke this with an air of consequence and authority.

The man of genius was ushered into the library of the literary lord, who, raising his glass to his eye, surveyed him from head to foot with a look partaking of scorn and disgust; and there was no mistaking that its meaning was—"Stand back!" At length, he desired our author to remain where he was, and to read his manuscript. The chagrin which he felt at this reception, marred the effect of the first two or three sentences, but, as he acquired his self-possession, he read with excellent feeling and emphasis. Every sentence told. "Good! good!" said the peer, rubbing his hands—"that will do!—excellent!—give me the manuscript!"

George was stepping boldly forward to the chair of his lordship, when the latter, rising, stretched his arm at its extreme length across the table, and received the manuscript between his finger and thumb, as though he feared contagion from the touch of the author, or fancied that the plague was sewed up between the seams of his threadbare coat. The peer glanced his eye over the title-page, which George had not read—"*A Defence of the War with France*," said he; "by—by who!—the deuce!—George Rogers!—who is George Rogers?"

"I am, your lordship," answered the author.

"You are!—you!" said his lordship, "you the author of *the Defence?* Impertinent fool! had not you the idea from me? Am not I to pay for it? The work is mine!" So saying, he rang the bell, and addressing the servant who entered, added—"Give that gentleman a guinea."

George withdrew in rage and bewilderment, and his poverty, not his will, consented to accept the insulting remuneration. Within two days, he saw at the door of every bookseller, a placard with the words—"*Just Published, A* DEFENCE OF THE WAR WITH FRANCE, *by the Right Hon. Lord L*———." George compared himself to Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage—he had bartered his name, his fame, and the fruits of his genius, for a paltry guinea.

He began to be ashamed of the shabbiness of his garments—the withering meaning of the word clung round him—he felt it as a festering sore eating into his very soul, and he appeared but little upon the streets. He had been several weeks without a lodging, and though it was now summer, the winds of heaven afford but a comfortless blanket for the shoulders when the midnight dews fall upon the earth. He had slept for several nights in a hay-field in the suburbs, on the Kent side of the river; and his custom was, to lift a few armfulls aside on a low rick, and laying himself down in the midst of it, gradually placing the hay over his feet, and the rest of his body, until the whole was covered. But the hay season did not last for ever; and one morning, when fast asleep in the middle of the rick, he was roused by a sudden exclamation of mingled horror and astonishment. He looked up, and beside him stood a countryman, with is mouth open, and his eyes gazing wistfully. In his hand he held a hayfork, and on the prongs of the fork was one of the skirts of poor George's coat! He gazed angrily at the countryman, and ruefully at the fragment of his unfortunate coat; and, rising, he drew round the portion of it that remained on his back, to view "the rent the envious *hayfork* made."

"By goam! chap," said the countryman, when he regained

his speech, "I have made thee a spencer; but I might have run the fork through thee, and it would have been no blame of mine."

They were leading the hay from the field, and the genius was deprived of his lodging. It was some nights after this, he was wandering in the neighbourhood of Poplar, fainting and exhausted—sleeping, starting, dreaming—as he dragged his benumbed and wearied limbs along; and, as he was crossing one of the bridges over the canal, he saw one of the long fly-boats, which ply with goods to Birmingham and Manchester, lying below it. George climbed over the bridge and dropped into the boat; and finding a quantity of painted sailcloth near the head of the boat, which was used as a covering for the goods, to protect them from the weather, he wrapped himself up in it, and lay down to sleep. How long he lay he knew not, for he slept most soundly; and, when he awoke, he felt more refreshed than he had been for many nights. But he started as he heard the sound of voices near him; and, cautiously withdrawing the canvass from over his face, he beheld that the sun was up; and, to increase his perplexity, fields, trees, and hedges were gliding past him. While he slept, the boatmen had put the horses to the barge, and were now on their passage to Birmingham, and several miles from London; but though they had passed and repassed the roll of canvass, they saw not, and they suspected not that they "carried Cæsar and his fortunes." George speedily comprehended his situation; and extricating his limbs from the folds of the canvass as quietly as he could, he sprang to his feet, stepped to the side of the boat, and, with a desperate bound, reached the bank of the canal.

"Hollo!" shouted the astonished boatmen. "Hollo! what have you been after?"

George made no answer, but ran with his utmost speed down the side of the canal.

"Hollo! stop thief!—stop thief!" bellowed the boatmen; and, springing to the ground, they gave chase to the genius. The boys, also, who rode the horses that dragged the boat, unlinked them and joined in the pursuit. It was a noble chase! But when George found himself pursued, he left the side of the canal, and took to the fields, clearing hedge, ditch, fence, and stonewall, with an agility that would have done credit to a first-rate hunter. The horses were at fault in following his example, and the boys gave up the chase; and when the boatmen had pursued him for the space of half a mile, finding they were losing ground at every step, they returned, panting and breathless, to their boat. George, however, slackened his pace but little until he arrived at the Edgeware road, and there he resumed his wonted slow and melancholy saunter, and sorrowfully returned towards London. He now, poor fellow, sometimes shut his eyes to avoid the sight of his own shadow, which he seemed to regard as a caricature of his forlorn person; and, in truth, he now appeared miserably forlorn—I had almost said ludicrously so. His coat has been already mentioned, with its wounded elbows, and imagine it now with the skirts which had been torn away with the hayfork, when the author of an epic was nearly forked upon a cart as he reposed in a bundle of hay—imagine now the coat with that skirt awkwardly pinned to it—fancy also that the button-holes had become useless, and that all the buttons, save two, had taken leave of his waistcoat—his trousers, also, were as smooth at the knees as though they had been glazed and hot-pressed, and they were so bare, so very bare, that the knees could almost be seen through them without spectacles. Imagine, also, that this suit had once been black, and that it had changed colours with the weather, the damp hay, the painted canvass, and the cold earth on which he slept; and, add to this, a hat, the brim of which was broken, and the crown fallen in—with shoes, the soles of which had departed, and the heels involuntarily bent down, as if ready to perform the service of slippers. Imagine these things, and you have a personification of George Rogers, as he now wended his weary way towards London.

He had reached the head of Oxford Street, and he was standing irresolute whether to go into the city or turn into the Park, to hide himself from the eyes of man, and to lie down in solitude with his misery, when a lady and a gentleman crossed the street to where he stood. Their eyes fell upon him—the lady started—George beheld her, and he started too—he felt his heart throb, and a blush burn over his cheek. He knew her at the first glance—it was the fair stranger—his mother's first-foot! He turned round—he hurried towards the Park—he was afraid—he was ashamed to look behind him. A thousand times had he wished to meet that lady again, and now he had met her, and he fled from her—the shame of his habiliments entered his soul. Still he heard footsteps behind him, and he quickened his pace. He had entered the Park, but yet he heard the sound of the footsteps following.

"Stop, young man!" cried a voice from behind him. But George walked on as though he heard it not. The word "stop!" was repeated; but, instead of doing so, he was endeavouring to hurry onward, when, as we have said, one of the shoes which had become slippers, and which were bad before, but worse from his flight across the ploughed fields, came off, and he was compelled to stop and stoop, to put it again upon his foot, or to leave his shoe behind him. While he stopped, therefore, to get the shoe again upon his foot, the person who followed him came up—it was the gentleman whom he had seen with the fair unknown. With difficulty he obtained a promise from George that he would call upon him at his house in Pimlico in the afternoon; and when he found our genius too proud to accept of money, he thrust into the pocket of the memorable skirt, which the hayfork had torn from the parent cloth, all the silver which he had upon his person.

When the gentleman had left him, George burst into tears. They were tears of pride, of shame, and of agony.

At length, he took the silver from the pocket of his skirt; he counted it in his hand—it amounted to nearly twenty shillings. Twenty shillings will go farther in London than in any city in the world with those who know how to spend it—but much depends upon that. By all the by-ways he could find, George winded his way down to Rosemary Lane, where the "*Black and Blue Reviver*" worketh miracles, and where the children of Israel are its high priests. Within an hour, wonderful was the metamorphosis upon the person of George Rogers. At eleven o'clock he was clothed as a beggar—at twelve he was shabby genteel. The hat in ruins was replaced by one of a newer shape, and that had been brushed and ironed till it was as clear as a looking-glass. The skirtless coat was thrown aside for an olive-coloured one of metropolitan cut, with a velvet collar, and of which, as the Israelite who sold it said, "de *glosh* was not off." The buttonless vest was laid aside for one of a light colour, and the place of the decayed trousers was supplied by a pair of pure white; yea, his feet were enclosed in sheep-skin shoes, which, he was assured, had never been upon foot before. Such was the change produced upon the outer man of George Rogers through twenty shillings; and, thus arrayed, with a beating and an anxious heart, he proceeded in the afternoon to the home of the beautiful stranger who had been the eventful first-foot in his father's house. As he crossed the Park by the side of the Serpentine, he could not avoid stopping to contemplate, perhaps I should say admire, the change that been wrought upon his person, as it was reflected in the water as in a mirror. When he had arrived at Pimlico, and been ushered into the house, there was surprise on the face of the gentleman as he surveyed the change that had come over the person of his guest; but in

the countenance of the young lady there was more of delight than of surprise. When he had sat with them for some time, the gentleman requested that he would favour them with his history and his adventures in London. George did so from the days of his childhood, until the day when the fair lady before him became his mother's first-foot; and he recounted also his adventures and his struggles in London, as we have related them; and, as he spoke, the lady wept. As he concluded, he said—"And, until this day, I have ever found an expression, which my uncle made in a letter, verified, that 'the moment the elbows of my coat opened, every door would shut.'"

"Your uncle!" said the gentleman, eagerly; "who is he?—what is his name?"

"He commands a vessel of his own in the merchant service," replied George, "and his name is John Rogers."

"John Rogers!" added the gentleman; "and your father's name?"

"Richard Rogers," answered George.

The young lady gazed upon him anxiously; and words seemed leaping to her tongue, when the gentleman prevented her, saying, "Isabel, love, I wish to speak with this young man in private," and she withdrew. When they were left alone, the gentleman remained silent for a few minutes, at times gazing in the face of George, and again placing his hand upon his brow. At length he said—"I know your uncle, and I am desirous of serving you—he also will assist you if you continue to deserve it. But you must give up book-making as a business; and you must not neglect business for book-making. You understand me. I shall give you a letter to a gentleman in the city, who will take you into his counting-house; and if, at the expiration of three months, I find your conduct has been such as to deserve my approbation, you shall meet me here again."

He then wrote a letter, which, having sealed, he put it, with a purse, into the hands of George, who sat speechless with gratitude and astonishment.

On the following day, George delivered the letter to the merchant, and was immediately admitted as a clerk into his counting-house. He was ignorant of the name of his uncle's friend; and when he ventured to inquire at the merchant respecting him, he merely told him, he was one whose good opinion he would not advise him to forfeit. In this state of suspense, George laboured day by day at the desk; and although he was most diligent, active, and anxious to please, yet frequently, when he was running up figures, or making out an invoice, his secret thoughts were of the fair Isabel—the daughter of his uncle's friend, and his mother's first-foot. He regretted that he did not inform her father that he was his uncle's heir—he might then have been admitted to his house, and daily seen her on whom his thoughts dwelt. His situation was agreeable enough—it was paradise to what he had experienced; yet the three months of his probation seemed longer than twelve.

He had been a few weeks employed in the counting-house, when he received a letter from his parents. His father informed him that they had received a letter from his uncle, who was then in London; but, added he, "he has forgotten to gie us his direction, where we may write to him. or where ye may find him." His mother added an important postscript, in which she informed him, that "She was sorry she was right after a', that there wasna luck in a squintin' first-foot; for he would mind o' the sailor that brought the letter, that said he was to be his uncle's heir; and now it turned out that his uncle had found an heir o' his ain."

It was the intention of George, when he had read the letter, to go to the house of his benefactor, and inquire for his uncle's address, or the name of the ship; but when he reflected that he might know neither—that he was not to return to his house for three months, nor until he was sent for—and, above all, when he thought that he was no longer his uncle's heir, and that he now could offer up no plea for looking up to the lovely Isabel—he resumed his pen with a stifled sigh, and abandoned the thought of finding out his uncle for the present.

He had been rather more than ten weeks in the office, when the unknown Isabel entered and inquired for the merchant. She smiled upon George as she passed him—the smile entered his very soul, and the pen shook in his hand. It was drawing towards evening, and the merchant requested George to accompany the young lady home. Joy and agitation raised a tumult in his breast—he seized his hat—he offered her his arm—but he scarce knew what he did. For half an hour he walked by her side without daring or without being able to utter a single word. They entered the Park; the lamps were lighted amidst the trees along the Mall, and the young moon shone over them. It was a lovely and an imposing scene, and with it George found a tongue. He dwelt upon the effect of the scenery—he quoted passages from his own epic—and he spoke of the time when his fair companion was his mother's first-foot. She informed him that she was then hastening to the deathbed of her grandfather, whom she believed to be the only relative that she had in life—that she arrived in time to receive his blessing, and that, with his dying breath, he told her her father yet lived—and, for the first time, she heard his name, and had found him. George would have asked what that name was, but when he attempted to do so he hesitated, and the question was left unfinished. They spoke of many things, and often they walked in silence; and it was not until the watchman called—"Past nine o'clock." that they seemed to discover that instead of proceeding towards Pimlico, they had been walking backward and forward upon the Mall. He accompanied her to her father's door, and left her with his heart filled with unutterable thoughts.

The three months had not quite expired, when the anxiously-looked-for invitation arrived, and George Rogers was to dine at the house of his uncle's friend—the father of the fair Isabel. I shall not describe his feelings as he hastened along the streets towards Pimlico. He arrived at the house, and his hand shook as he reached it to the rapper. The door was opened by a strange-looking footman. George thought that he had seen him before—it was indeed a face that, if once seen, was not easily forgotten—the footman had not such large whiskers as Bill Somers, but they were of the same colour, and they certainly were the same eyes that had frightened his mother in the head of her first-foot. He was shewn into a room where Isabel and her father waited to receive him. "When I last saw you, sir," said the latter, "you informed me you were the nephew of John Rogers. He finds he has no cause to be ashamed of you. George, my dear fellow, your uncle Jack gives you his hand! Isabel, welcome your cousin!" "My cousin!" cried George. "My cousin!" said Isabel. What need we say more—before the New Year came, they went down to Scotland a wedded pair, to be his mother's first-foot in the farm-house which had been rebuilt.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE PERSECUTED ELECTOR;

OR,

PASSAGES FROM THE LIFE OF SIMON GOURLAY.

Be not afraid, most courteous reader: you will find nothing of party politics in the following Passages from the Life of Simon Gourlay. Know, then, that Simon was a douce, respectable member of the town-council in the burgh of L——; and it was his lot or his misfortune, as he affirmed, to be a sorely persecuted elector. But we must allow Simon to narrate the history of his persecutions in his own words. "Weel," he was wont to begin, "though I verily believe I am ane o' the most moderate men breathing, and although I seldom or never fashed my head about either Whig or Tory, I am firmly persuaded there's no a man living that has suffered mair frae baith parties; they hae kicked me about as though I had been a sort o' political footba'. Ye must understand that I am ane o' the principal men in our toun-council, o' which my faither was a distinguished member afore me. By virtue o' my office, I had a vote for a member o parliament to represent our ancient burgh; and it had been the advice o' my worthy faither to me, owre an' owre again—'Simon,' he used to say, 'if ye some day live to hae the honour o' being called to the council, remember my maxim—aye vote for the winning side. Mind ye this, if ye wish yer kail to be weel lithed, or to enjoy the respect o' yer neighbours.' Now, as I hae said, my faither was a very respectable man; he was meikle looked up to in the town, and his word, I may say, was the law o' the council; indeed, he had a most wonderfully impressive manner o' delivering himsel'! and when he began to speak, ye wad said it was a minister preaching; but, in the coorse o' nature, he died, having adhered to his maxim through life, and I succeeded him in the business. Now, it was some years after this, and after I had been called to the council, there was an el ction took place for the burgh. There were two candidates—a Mr Wood, and a Captain Oliver belonging to the navy. They were both remarkably pleasant weel-spoken gentlemen; as to their politics, I knew very little about them, for, as my faither used to observe, it was a very unbecoming thing for the like o' us, that had only ae vote, to ask ony gentleman about his principles. Weel, it was at this election that my persecutions began; and sorry am I to say that they had their beginning, too, in my own family. One day I was in the shop serving some customers, and, before I was aware, Mr Wood's carriage stopped at the door. For onything I ken, his politics were the same as those o' Captain Oliver; but, somehow or other, he was exceedingly popular in the toun, and the laddies had '*Wood for ever!*' written on the wa's and window-shutters, wi' bits o' chalk. There was a crowd came rinning, and cheered round about the carriage at the shop door; for Mr Wood generally threw awa a handful or twa o' siller amongst them. I wad hae slipped into the parlour to been out o' the way, had it no been that folk were in the shop, and I saw there was naething for it but to stand fire. Weel, as I'm telling ye, Mr Wood and twa or three ither gentlemen came into the shop; and really he was a very pleasant, affable gentleman, wi' a great deal of manners and condescension about him. I was much interested wi' his look, and a good deal at a loss what to say. There was nae pride about him whatever; but he just came in, and took my hand as familiarly as if I had been his equal, and we had been acquainted for twenty years.

'I have the honour of soliciting your vote and interest at the approaching election, Mr Gourlay,' says he.

'Weel, really, sir,' says I, 'as my faither afore me used to observe, I'll tak the matter into consideration—it's best no to be in a hurry; but I'll be very happy—that is, it will afford me a great deal o' pleasure—if I can obleege ye; but—I'm rather unprepared—ye hae ta'en me unawares.'

'Well, I trust I may reckon upon you as a friend,' said he—'I shall be very proud of Mr Gourlay's support'

'Why, sir,' says I, 'as my worthy faither'—— And just as I said this, some o' the youngsters about the door set up a titter and a hiss. It was very provoking for a magistrate to be laughed at in his ain shop, by a parcel o' idle, blackguard, half-grown dies; an', 'Ye young scoundrels,' says I, 'I'll put half-a-dizen o' ye into the blackhole.' And, wi' this the young persecutors hissed and tittered the mair, and set up a shout o' derision. It was vexatious beyond measure and as I was saying, I didna ken weel what to do, for there was folk in the shop; and, as Mr Wood and the gentlemen that were wi' him, pressed me to say definitely whether I wad gie him a vote, I observed Persecution also shaking its nieve at me frae the parlour! For, ye'll observe, that it was also my misfortune to be plagued wi' ane o' the sairest trials o' Job—an ill-tempered, domineering woman for a wife. She was my second wife, and mony a time hae I said, when she vexed me beyond what my spirit could bear, that I could gang to the kirkyard, and pick the remains o' my dear first partner frae the cauld grave, bane by bane, could it restore her to my bosom again, or free me frae the persecution o' her that had succeeded her. Weel, as I was saying, while Mr Wood and his friends were pressing me, I threw a glent at the parlour door, which was half glass, wi' a curtain ahint it, and got a glance o' Mrs Gourlay standing shaking her head and her nieve, as meikle as to say, 'Gie him a vote at your peril, Simon!' Whether my face betrayed ony visible tokens o' my inward agony or no, I canna say, but it so happened that the confounded callants had got a peep at Mrs Gourlay ahint the parlour door, as weel as me, and the young rascals, having seen her manœuvres, cried out—'*Three cheers for Mrs Gourlay!*' The cheers gaed through my ears like a knife—weel did I ken that they would be rung through them for a week to come! I can hardly tell you how Mr Wood and the gentlemen left the shop: but their back; werena weel turned till a quick rap cam

upon the glass at the parlour window; and a quicker voice cried—'Gourlay, ye're wanted.' I desired the lads to attend to the customers, and I slipped awa ben to the parlour. There sat her leddyship, just like a tempest ready to burst.

'Ay, man!—ye simpleton!—ye nosiewax!' cried she; 'and ye'll hae the impudence to gie a vote without consulting me!—ye'll say, as yer silly auld faither said'——

'Come, Mrs Gourlay,' says I, 'ye may carry yer cantrips upon me as far as ye like, but ye shanna, in my hearing, breathe a word against the memory o' my worthy faither.'

"And ye sha'na vote for Wood,' cried she—'or I'll keep ye in het water to the end o' yer days.'

'Really, my dear,' says I, 'I think ye keep me in het water as it is. But I hae gien nae vote as yet; and, as my worthy faither used to observe'——

'The mischief tak ye and yer faither!' cried she; 'can ye no speak without aye bleth'rin' aboot him!'

'Mrs Gourlay!' says I, 'I've warned ye'——

'Simon Gourlay!' cried she, 'I've cautioned ye'——

And just as the altercation was like to run very high, and to become very unseemly, another carriage drew up to the door, and out came Captain Oliver and his friends. The Captain was a pleasant gentleman, also, and very honest like. My wife flew and opened the parlour door; and in an instant she put on such a hypocritical, weel-pleased look. 'Mercy!' thinks I, 'what's that o't?—a woman can change her countenance quicker than a northern light, which glimmers and vanishes before you can say, Jock Robison!' Weel, I hastily rubbed my face wi' my pocket handkerchief, and made a step forward to the glass to see how I looked; for I thought it would be very unbecoming in a member o' the council, and a magistrate o' the burgh, to be seen in a flurry, or as if he had been flytin'. I watna whether the Captain had heard that 'the grey mare was the better horse,' in my house or no; for there were evil-disposed persons malicious enough to say such a thing; but he came straight forward to Mrs Gourlay; and—

'I am most happy to see you, Mrs Gourlay,' said he; 'I trust I shall have the honour of *your* interest. I know I have nothing to fear if I have the good wishes of the ladies upon my side; and, without vanity, Ma'am, I believe I have them.

My termagant smiled and curtsied to the very floor. 'Pray, step in, Captain,' said she—'step in, gentlemen; Mr Gourlay is within. I am sure you have *our* vote; I answer for that.'

My blood boiled; I felt indignation warm upon my face. I was stepping forward to pull her by the gown, when the Captain and his friends entered.

'I am very much obliged to you, Mr Gourlay,' said he, 'for the very handsome manner in which you have given me your support.'

'Not at all obliged to me, sir,' said I; 'but—but'——

Mrs Gourlay gave me a look; and its meaning needed no words to interpret it.

'Thank you, sir—thank you,' said the Captain; 'I am indeed obliged, very much obliged, for the frank and handsome manner in which you have given me your'——

'Excuse me, Captain,' says I; 'but I would wish a little time just to consider—to mak up my mind, as it were; for, as my faither'——

'Dinna detain the Captain,' interrupted my wife; 'he didna ken yer faither; ye must not mind my goodman, gentlemen,' said she; 'he wad aye be considering and considering—but just put down his name, and nae mair about it. He daurna but vote for ye.'

'Daurna! Mrs Gourlay, says I; 'that's very improper language to use to the like o' me.'

Ay, help us! the like o' you, indeed, Simon!' said she. Just put down his name, as I'm telling ye, gentlemen.'

I kenned it would be imprudent in a man o' my respectability to flee into a passion, and so held my tongue; and the Captain, turning to me, said—

'Good morning, sir; and I assure you I am much obliged to you.' And, turning round to my wife, and shaking her hand, he added—'And many thanks to *you*, Ma'am.'

'You are welcome, sir,' said she; 'very welcome to half a dozen votes, if we had them.'

What took place between us after the Captain and his party left, I will not relate to ye, for it was very disgracefu'—I'm ashamed o't until this day; indeed, I carried the marks o' her nails upon my face for the space o' a fortnight, which looked particularly ill upon the countenance o' a magistrate. Weel, it was in the afternoon o' the same day, ane o' the gentlemen belonging to Mr Wood's party, called again at the shop; and, me being in the haberdashery line, he wished to purchase a quantity o' ribbons for election favours. To the best o' my recollection, he bought to the amount o' between twa and three pounds' worth; and, to my surprise, he pulled out a fifty pound bank note to pay for them.

'I fear, sir,' says I, 'I'm short o' change: an' ye can pay for the ribbons ony day as ye're passing.'

'Oh, no,' says he, 'don't talk about the change—it can be got at any time.' And he laid the fifty pound note upon the counter. 'I trust,' added he, 'we may now reckon upon Mr Gourlay's support.'

'Really, sir,' says I, 'I have not had time to weigh—that is, to turn over the subject in my mind properly; but I will consider of it. I am sure Mr Wood has my good wishes.'

'Thank you, sir,' said the gentleman, leaving the shop, 'I shall inform Mr Wood that he may reckon upon you.'

Now, I would have called after him, that he was by no means to reckon upon onything o' the sort, for I had not made up my mind; but I thought it would look ill, and I suffered him to leave with the impression that I was a supporter o' his party. I couldna think for a moment that he proposed onything to a man like me by no taking the change o' the note; and I intended to send it to the inn in the morning as soon as the Bank opened; but I happened to say, in the course o' conversation, to a neebor that dropped into the shop a short while after, that I thought Mr Wood was very liberal and flush o' his siller; and I unthinkingly mentioned the circumstance o' the fifty pound note, and the change, and the ribbons. Weel, the person left the shop without making any particular remark upon the circumstance that I observed; but what was my horror, I may say my confusion and astonishment, when, just on the edge o' the evening, (for it was in the summer time,) and just as we were shutting up the shop, here's a great gilravishing and a shouting at the end o' the street, and alang comes twa or three hundred callants, and some young chields that were never out o' mischief, wi' the effigy o' a man tied to a pole; and they had the odious thing dressed as like me as possible; but what was worse than a', they had a great label on its breast, wi' the words, '*Fifty pounds for a pirn o' ribbons!*' written on it; and they had the audacity to stand shouting and yelling, and to burn it afore my door. I was in such a passion as I believe man never was in afore! Me! a magistrate, and ane o' the principal men o' the town-council, to be thought guilty o' takin a bribe! It was horrible! horrible! I first seized the yardwand, and I rushed into the crowd, and laid round me right and left, until it was shivered to pieces; and then I ran into the shop, while the mob kept hissing and yelling; and I took the fifty pound note, and gied it to ane o' the shop-lads—'Rin,' says I, 'rin wi' that to Mr Wood, or to the gentleman that brought it, and tell them I neither wish to see their money nor their custom.'

So the lad ran wi' the note to the inn, and did as I ordered him. But oh! I had an awfu' nicht wi' Mrs Gourlay;

There wasna an ill name that she could get her tongue about that she didna ca' me. 'Silly Simon!' and 'Simple Simon!' were the gentlest terms that she used. I was ashamed to shew my face at the door, for I was the toun's talk. But, still, notwithstanding a' the persecution I was sufferin', I was in a swither hoo to act, for I was determined, if possible, to abide by my worthy faither's advice, an' vote wi' the winning side. However, it was hard to say which would be the winning side; for, though Mr Wood was a great favourite wi' a majority o' the working-classes, and even wi' a number o' the council, an' though he was very liberal an' lavish wi' his money, as I have said, yet there was a great number o' respectable folk took a very warm interest for Captain Oliver. There were a vast o' my best customers on baith sides, and it was really a very delicate matter for me to decide hoo to act—for ye will observe I am the last man in the world that would offend onybody, and especially a person that I'm obleeged to. Weel, just while I was pondering the matter, and considering in which way my worthy faither would have acted under similar circumstances, I received a letter in the name o' three or four leddies, from whom I had, first and last, received a great deal o' siller—and who, at the same time, were gey deeply in my books—and they plainly informed me, that, unless I voted for Captain Oliver, they never, while they lived, would buy a sixpence worth o' goods in my shop again. I thought it was very hard for a respectable merchant and a toun-councillor to be so persecuted and beset; and just while I was sitting very sair perplexed, in comes the postman wi' another letter. It was frae a Glasgow manufacturer that I had lang had dealings wi'; and he trusted that I would oblige him by voting for his friend, Mr Wood; or, if not, that I would make it convenient to ay off his bill within three days, or that he would find it necessary to adopt means to obtain payment. This was worse and worse; and I must inform you that the account which he had against me never would have been due but for the extravagance o' my second Mrs Gourlay. I was in a state o' misery indescribable. I wished frae the bottom o' my heart that I had been a hand-loom weaver, workin' for a shilling a-day, rather than toun-councillor; for then I micht hae been independent. However, my wife seemed determined to tak the masterskep in the business a'the gither; an', what wi' the talkin' o' the toun, the threatening o' customers and creditors, and her everlasting scolding, I really was greatly to be pitied. The youngsters ha bonfires round the toun in honour o' the different candidates, and I had an excellent peat-stack behind the house. Weel, when I gaed out in the morning, what should be the first thing I observed, but that the half o' my peat-stack was carried off bodily! 'Confound ye for a parcel o' persecuting thieves,' said I to mysel, 'but some o' ye shall get transportation for this, as sure as I'm a magistrate!' However, upon second thoughts, and as I had nae doubt but they had been carried off for the bonfires, and as it was likely that they wad be kindling them that night again—'Sorrow tak ye,' thinks I, 'but I'll gie some o' ye a snifter! So what does I do, but sends the shop-laddie awa to an ironmonger's for a pound o' pouther! Mortal man canna stand it!' says I; 'I'll blaw up the scoundrels!' I acknowledge it wasna just becoming the dignity o' the leading man in the toun-council to tak sic revenge. But I slipped awa round to the back o' the house wi' a big gimlet in my hand, and I bores holes in a dozen or twa o' the peats, on the north side o' the stack, and filled them wi' pouther; and having closed the holes, I was just gaun to tell them in the house no to tak ony peats off the north side o' the stack, when a circumstance occurred that drove it completely out o' my memory. Mrs Gourlay had an idle, worthless, half-gentleman sort o' a brother, and, to my utter astonishment and dismay, I found him sitting in the parlour when I went in. 'Brother Simon, said he, stretching out his hand, 'I shall never forget your kindness.'

'My kindness!' says I—'what do you mean?'

'Mean!' said my wife, in her usual snappy, disdainful manner; 'on account of *our* vote—which, it is believed, will be the *casting* vote—think o' that, Simon Gourlay—Captain Oliver has promised my brother a place under government!'

'My stars!' says I, 'a place under government!—*our* vote!—I think, ma'am, ye micht hae consulted *me* before ye bought a place for your brother wi' my vote; and, as my worthy faither used to observe, I maun be sure about the winning side before I promise onything o' the sort.'

'Consult *you!*' cried she, like a firebrand—'consult *you*, indeed!—I'll tell ye what, Councillor Gourlay, if ye had a spark o' natural affection, as you ought to have, for your lawful wife, ye wad scorn to stand higgling about a paltry vote. But allow me to tell ye, sir, the thing is settled—ye *shall* vote for Captain Oliver; and, mair than that, I expect him and his friends to dine here this afternoon!'

Dine here!' says I, and was perfectly dumfoundered, as if a clap o' thunder had burst on my head. I felt I really was becoming a cipher in my ain house.

Yes, sir—dine here,' continued she; 'and see that ye mak them welcome, and be proud o' the honour.'

I slipped awa into the shop, and I took out the Glasgow manufacturer's letter, and I thought it was a terrible thing to be in debt, but still warse to he henpecked; but to be baith henpecked and in debt, was warse than death itsel'. I remained in a state of stupefaction until about three o'clock, when I was *ordered* to dress for dinner. Between four and five o'clock, Captain Oliver and several of his friends made their appearance. How I conducted mysel', I'm sure I canna say—I was dowie enough, but I tried to put the best face upon it that I could. Everything passed ower weel enough until after the cloth was withdrawn; and then wine was set upon the table, and speerits for them that preferred them, and the kettle was put upon the fire to keep boiling for the toddy. The servant lassie put twa or three peats on the fire; and just as she was gaun out o' the room, I remembered about the pouther! Never was human being in such a mortal state o' perturbation before. The sweat broke a' owre me. I rose and intended to rin down stairs, just to say that 'I hoped, in the name o' safety she hadna taen the peats off the north side o' the stack!' However, I had hardly reached the stair-head, and the sneck o' the door was still in my hand, when—good gracious!—sic an explosion!—sic a shout o' terror!—sic a tumblin' o' chairs and a breakin' o' glasses! I banged into the room; it was full o' smoke, and the smell o' sulphur was dreadfu'. 'Are ony o' ye hurt?' says I. There was groanin' and swearin' on ilka hand; and some o' them cried 'Seize him!'—'Seize me!' cried I—'goodness, sirs! wad ye seize a magistrate in his ain house!' The lid o' the kettle was blawn up the chimney, the kettle itsel' was driven across the table, wi' its boiling' contents scattered right an' left, an' nae small portion o' them poured over the precious person o' Captain Oliver! Oh! it was terrible!—terrible!—sic a dilemma as I never witnessed in my born days. I was in a situation that was neither to be explained nor described. Some o' them were fearfully scalded and scorched, too; an naething would satisfy them, but that I intended to blaw up the Captain an' the company! It was a second 'Gunpouther Plot' to secure the election o' Mr Wood! How did I answer,' said they, for the pouther being in the peats at all? and why did I leave the room in confusion, at the very moment it was about to take place?' 'Oh!' thought I, as they put the questions, 'what a lamentable situation is mine for ony man, but especially a magistrate, to be in!' As for Mrs Gourlay instead of sympathising for my distress, she fled

at me like a teeger, an seized me by the hair o the head before them a'. Weel, the upshot was, that I was taen before my brother magistrates; and, sinking wi' shame as I was, I tauld the naked truth, an' was very severely admonished. I admitted that I had acted very indiscreetly, an' very unbecoming a member o' the council; but I assured them, on my solemn oath, that I hadna dune sae wi' malice in my heart. They a' kenned me to be a very quiet, inoffensive man; an' the Captain's party agreeing that, if I voted for him the next day, they would push the matter no farther, I gied him my hand an' promise, an' the business was dropped. But the next day, the great day of election, came. Until I had promised, the numbers o' the candidates were equal; and, sure enough, mine was the important—the *casting* vote. Weel, just as I was stepping down to the toun-house, we' my een fixed upon the ground—for I was certain that everybody was looking at me—some person tapped me upon the shoulder, an' I looked up an' there was a sheriff's officer! A kind o' palsy ran owre me frae head to foot in a moment! 'Mr Gourlay,' said the man, 'I am sorry to inform ye that ye are my prisoner.'

'Is it possible?' said I. 'Weel, if ye'll just allow me to gang up an' vote, I'll see about bail.

'Ye may come into the public-house here,' said he; 'but I canna allow ye to vote, nor to go out o' my sicht.'

Weel, I was arrested for the debt that I owed to the manufacturer. It was gey heavy, and during an election though it was, I found bail wasna to be had. I voted nane that day, an' that nicht I went to jail. I lay there about three months, an', when I got free, I found that I was also freed from the persecution o' Mrs Gourlay, who had broken a blood-vessel in a fit o' passion, an', during my imprisonment, was buried by the side o' her ain relations: an' such are the particulars o' my persecution during an election; an', certainly, every reasonable an' feeling man will admit I had just enough o' it, an' mair than I deserved."

THE ORDER OF THE GARTER

A STORY OF WARK CASTLE.

A LITTLE above Coldstream, on the south side of the Tweed, stands the village of Wark, where a walled mound is all that remains to point out where its proud Castle once stood. "We know that," some dweller on the Borders may exclaim; "but what has Wark Castle to do with the Order of the Garter?" Our answer to this question simply is, that, if tradition may be trusted, or the historian Froissard believed, but for Wark Castle and there would have been no Order of the Garter. But this the following story will shew. It was early in the autumn of 1342, that David Bruce, King of Scotland, led an army across the Borders, and laid waste the towns and villages of Northumberland, as far as Newcastle. The invading army seized upon the cattle, the flocks, the goods, and the gold of the Northumbrians; and they were returning, overladen with spoils, when they passed within two miles of Wark Castle, which was then the property of the Earl of Salisbury. The Earl was absent; but, on the highest turret of the Castle, stood his Countess, the peerless Joan Plantagenet, daughter of the Earl of Kent, and cousin of King Edward. Her fair cheeks glowed, and her bright eyes flashed indignation, as she beheld the long line of the Scottish army pass by, laden with the plunder of her countrymen.

"Am not I a Plantagenet?" she exclaimed—"flows not the blood of England in my veins?—and shall I tamely behold our enemies parade the spoils of my country before mine eyes? Ho! warden!" she continued, in a louder tone, "send hither Sir William Montague."

Sir William was the brother of her husband, and the governor of the castle.

"Behold!" said she, sternly, as the governor approached, and pointing towards the Scottish army. "Is it well that we should look like imprisoned doves upon yon rebel host? Or shall ye, Sir Governor, discharge your duty to your sovereign, if ye strike not one blow for England and revenge?"

"Fair sister," returned the knight, "ere an hour after nightfall, and the cry—'For England and the Rose of Wark!' shall burst as the shout of death upon the ears of our enemies. A troop of forty horsemen wait but my word to become the messengers of vengeance."

"Good, my brother" she replied, while her former frown relaxed into a smile; "and each man who hath done his duty, shall, on his return, drink a cup of wine from the hands of Joan Plantagenet."

Darkness began to gather round the turrets of the castle, and on the highest the gentle figure of the Countess was still indistinctly visible; now walking round it with impatient steps, and again gazing eagerly to obtain another glance of the Scottish army, or counting the fires which sprang up along the lines where it had encamped for the night, when Sir William and forty of the garrison, mounted on fleet steeds, sallied from the gate of the outer wall.

'"Our ladye speed ye, gallant hearts!" said the fair Joan as she beheld them sweep past like a dark cloud on their work of blood.

The Scottish army were encamped a little beyond Carham, carousing around their fires from flagons filled with the best wine they had found in the cellars of the Northumbrian nobility; over the fires, suspended from poles, were skins of sheep and of bullocks, rudely sewed into the form of bags, and filled with water—these served them as pots, and the flesh of the animals was boiled in their own skins. Amongst the revellers were veterans who had fought by the side of Wallace and Bruce; and, while some recounted the deeds of the patriot, and inspired their comrades with accounts of his lion-like courage and prodigious strength, others, with the goblet in hand, fought Bannockburn o'er again. Thus the song, the jest, the laugh, the tale of war, and the wine cup went round, amidst the bustle of culinary preparations, and each man laid his arms aside and gave himself up to enjoyment and security.

Suddenly there arose upon their mirth the trampling and the neighing of war-steeds, the clang of shields, and the shouts of armed men, and naked swords gleamed through the fire-light. "For England and the Rose of Wark!" exclaimed Sir William Montague—"For England and our ladye!" echoed his followers. They rushed through the Scottish lines like a whirlwind, trampling the late revellers beneath their horses' feet, and fleshing their swords in the bodies of unarmed men. For a time they left carnage behind them, and spread consternation before them.

The surprise and panic of the Scottish army, however, were of short duration. "To horse!—to horse!" rang through the camp, and they began to enclose the small but desperate band of assailants on every side.

"England is revenged!—to the Castle with our spoils!" cried Sir William; and they retreated towards Wark, carrying with them a hundred and sixty horses laden with plunder, while the Scots pursued them to the very gates. The Countess hastened to the outer gate to meet them; and as, by the torches borne by her attendants, she surveyed the number of horses they had taken, and the rich booty which they bore—"Thanks, Sir William!" cried she—"thanks, my gallant countrymen—ye have done bravely; merry England

hath still its chivalrous and stout hearts upon the Borders; —to-night shall each man pledge his ladye love in the ruddy wine."

But there was one who welcomed Sir William Montague's return with silent tears—the gentle Madeline Aubrey, the companion of Joan Plantagenet, and the orphan daughter of a valiant knight, who had won his golden spurs by the side of the first Edward, and laid down his life in defence of his imbecile son. Madeline was, perhaps, less beautiful than the Countess; but her very looks spoke love—love, ardent, tender, and sincere. Hers was the beauty of the summer moon kissing the quiet lake, when the nightingale offers up its song—lovely and serene; Joan's was as the sun flashing upon the gilded sea—receiving the morning worship of the lark, and demanding admiration.

"Wherefore are ye sad, my sweet Madeline?" said Sir William, tenderly, as he drew off his gauntlet, and took her fair hand in his. "Joy ye not that I have returned sound in life and limb?"

"Yes, I joy that my William is safe," answered Madeline; "but will our safety last? Think ye not that ye have done desperately, and that the Scottish king, with to-morrow's sun, will avenge the attack ye have made on his camp to-night?"

"St George! and I pray he may!" added Sir William. "I am the dependant of my brother, with no fortune but my sword; and I should glory, beneath the eyes of my Madeline, to win such renown as would gain a dowry worthy of her hand."

"When that hand is given," added she, "your Madeline will seek no honour but her William's heart."

"Well, sweetest," rejoined he, "I know that ye rejoice not in the tournament, nor delight in the battle-field; yet would ye mourn to see your own true knight vanquished in the one, or turn craven on the other. Let Scotland's king besiege us if he will, and then with this good sword shall I prove my love for Madeline."

"Madeline is an orphan," added she, "and the sword hath made her such. She knows your courage as she knows your love, and she asks no farther proofs. The deed of chivalry may make the ladye proud of her knight, but it cannot win her affection."

"Well, sweet one," said he, playfully, "I should love to see thy pretty face in a monk's cowl, for thou dost preach of peace right potently. But come, love, wherefore are ye so sad—what troubles thee?"

"'Tis for you, I fear," she replied. "I know your daring, and I know that danger threatens us; and, oh! Madeline's hands could not deck your bosom for the battle; though, in her own breast, she would receive the stroke of death to shield it. For my sake, be not too rash; for, oh! in the silent hours of midnight—when the spirits of the dead visit the earth, and the souls of the living mingle with them in dreams—I have seen my father and my mother, and they have seemed to weep over their orphan—they have called on me to follow them; and I have thought of you, and the shout of the battle, and the clash of swords have mingled in my ears; and when I would have clasped your hands, the shroud has appeared my bridal garment.

"Come, love, 'tis an idle fancy," said he, tenderly; "dream no more. But that they have mewed me up in this dull castle, where honour seeks me not, and reward awaits not, and ere now my Madeline had worn her wedding-garment. But cheer up; for your sake, I will not be rash, though, for that fair brow, I would win a coronet."

"'Tis an honour that I covet not," said she; "nor would I risk thy safety for a moment to wear a crown."

Madeline was right in her apprehension that King David would revenge the attack that had been made upon the rear of his army. When, with the morning sun, he beheld two hundred of his soldiers lying dead upon the ground—"Now, by my halidame," said he, "and for this outrage, I will not leave one stone of Wark Castle upon another, but its ruins shall rise as a cairn over the graves of these men."

Before noon, the entire Scottish host were encamped around the Castle; and the young King sent a messenger to the gates, demanding the Countess and Sir William to surrender.

"Surrender! boasting Scot!" said the chivalrous Joan; "doth your boy king think that a Plantagenet will yield to a Bruce! Back and tell him that, ere a Scot among ye enter these gates, ye shall tread Joan Plantagenet in the dust; and the bodies of the bravest of your army shall fill the ditches of the Castle, that their comrades may pass over."

"I take not my answer from a woman's tongue," replied the herald; "what say ye, Sir Governor? Do ye surrender in peace, or choose ye that we raze Wark Castle with the ground?"

"If King David can, he may," was the brief and bold reply of Sir William Montague; "yet it were better for him that he should have tarried in Scotland until his beard be grown, than that he should attempt it."

"Ye speak boldly," answered the herald; "but ye shall not fare the worse, by reason of your free speech, when a passage shall be made through these walls for the Scottish army to enter."

The messenger having intimated the refusal of the governor to surrender to his prince, preparations were instantly made to commence the siege. The besieged, however, did not behold the preparations of their enemies and remain inactive. Every means of defence was got in readiness. The Countess hastened from post to post, inspiring the garrison with words of heroism, and stimulating them with rewards. Even the gentle Madeline shewed that her soul could rise with the occasion worthy of a soldier's love; and she, too, went from man to man, cheering them on, and with her sweet and silver tones, seemed to rob even death of half its terror. Sir William's heart swelled with delight as he beheld her mild eye lighted up with enthusiasm, and heard her voice, which was as music to his ear, giving courage to the faint-hearted, and heroism to the brave.

"Heaven bless my Madeline!" said he, taking her hand; "ye have taught me to know what true courage is, and our besiegers shall feel it. They may raze the walls of the castle with the ground, as they have threatened; but it shall be at a price that Scotland can never forget; and even then, my Madeline shall be safe. Farewell now, love; but as night gathers round, we must again prepare to assume the part of assailants."

"You must!—I know you must!" she replied; "yet be not too rash—attempt not more than a brave man ought—or all may be lost; you, too, may perish, and who, then, would protect your Madeline?"

He pressed her hand to his breast—again he cried, "Farewell!" and, hastening to a troop of horsemen who only waited his commands to sally from the gate upon the camp of their besiegers, the drawbridge was let down, and, at the head of his followers, he dashed upon the nearest point of the Scottish army. Deadly was the carnage which, for a time, they spread around; and, as they were again driven back and pursued to the gate, their own dead and their wounded were left behind. Frequently and suddenly were such sallies made, as the falcon watcheth its opportunity and darteth on its prey, and as frequently were they driven back, but never without leaving proof to the Scottish monarch, at what a desperate price Wark Castle was to be purchased Frequently, too, as they rushed forth, the Countess eagerly and impatiently beheld them from the turrets; and, as the harvest-moon broke upon their armour, she seemed to watch every flash of their swords, waving her hand with exultation, or raising her voice in a strain of triumph. But by her side, stood Madeline, gazing not less

eagerly, and not less interested in the work of danger and despair; but her eyes were fixed upon one only—the young leader of the chivalrous band who braved death for England and their ladye's sake. She also watched the flashing of the swords; but her eyes sought those only which glanced where the brightest helmet gleamed and the proudest plume waved. Often the contest was beneath the very walls of the castle, and she could hear her lover's voice, and behold him dashing as a thunderbolt into the midst of his enemies.

Obstinate, however, as the resistance of the garrison was, and bloody as the price, indeed, seemed at which the castle was to be purchased, David had too much of the Bruce in his blood to abandon the siege. He began to fill the ditches, and he ordered engines to be prepared to batter down the walls. The ditches were filled, and, before the heavy and ponderous blows of the engines, a breach was made in the outer wall, and with a wild shout a thousand of the Scottish troops rushed into the outer court.

"Joan Plantagenet disdains ye still!" cried the dauntless Countess. "Quail not, brave hearts," she exclaimed, addressing the garrison, who, with deadly aim, continued showering their arrows upon the besiegers; "before I yield, Wark Castle shall be my funeral pile!"

"And mine!" cried Sir William, as an arrow glanced from his hand, and became transfixed in the visor of one of the Scottish leaders.

Madeline glanced towards him, and her eyes, yet beaming with courage, seemed to say, "*And mine!*"

"And ours!" exclaimed the garrison—"and ours!" they repeated more vehemently; and, waving their swords, "Hurra!" cried they, "for our ladye, St George, and merry England!"

It was the shout of valiant but despairing men. Yet, as the danger rose, and as hope became less and less, so rose the determination of the Countess. She was present to animate at every place of assault. She distributed gold amongst them; her very jewels she gave in presents to the bravest; but, though they had shed much of the best blood in the Scottish army, their defence was hopeless, and their courage could not save them. Almost their last arrow was expended, and they were repelling their assailants from the inner wall with their spears, when *Want*, the most formidable enemy of the besieged, began to assail them from within.

It was now that the gentle Madeline, when Sir William endeavoured to inspire her with hope, replied—"I fear not to die—to die with you!—but tell me not of hope—it is not to be found in the courage of the brave garrison whom famine is depriving of their strength. There is one hope for us—only one; but it is a desperate hope, and I would rather die than risk the life of another."

"Nay, name it, dearest," said Sir William, eagerly; "and if the heart or hand of man can accomplish it, it shall be attempted."

Madeline hesitated.

"Speak, silly one," said the Countess, who had overheard them—"where lies your hope? Could true knight die in nobler cause? Name it; for I wot ye have a wiser head than a bold heart."

"Name it, do, dear Madeline," entreated Sir William.

"King Edward is now in Yorkshire," she replied; "could a messenger be dispatched to him, the castle might hold out until he hastened to our assistance."

"St George! and 'tis a happy thought!" replied the Countess. "I have not seen my cousin Edward since we were children together; but how know ye that he is in Yorkshire? I expected that, ere now, he was conquering the hearts of the dark-eyed dames of Brittany, while his arms conquered the country."

"In dressing the wounds of the aged Scottish nobleman," answered Madeline, "who was yesterday brought into the castle, he informed me."

"What think *ye* of *your* fair ladye's plan for our deliverance, good brother?" inquired the Countess, addressing the governor.

"Madeline said it would be a desperate attempt," replied he, thoughtfully—"and it would, indeed, be desperate—it is impossible."

"Out on thy knighthood, man!" rejoined the Countess—"is this the far-famed chivalry of Sir William Montague?—why, it is the proposition of your own fair ladye, whom, verily, ye cannot believe chivalrous to a fault. But is it to Joan Plantagenet that ye talk of impossibilities? I will stake thee my dowry against fair Madeline's, I find a hundred men in this poor garrison ready to dare and do what you declare impossible."

"You find not *two*, fair sister," said Sir William, proudly.

"Oh, say not *one*—not *one!*" whispered Madeline, earnestly.

Upon every man in the castle did the Countess urge the dangerous mission—she entreated, she threatened, she offered the most liberal, the most tempting rewards; but the boldest rejected them with dismay.

The Scottish army lay encompassing them around—their sentinels were upon the watch almost at every step, and to venture beyond the gate of the castle seemed but to meet death and to seek it.

"At midnight have my fleetest horse in readiness," said Sir William, addressing his attendant—"what no man dare, I will!"

"My brother!—thanks!—thanks!"—exclaimed the Countess, in a tone of joy.

Madeline clasped her hands together—her cheeks became pale—her voice faltered—she burst into tears.

"Weep not, loved one," said Sir William; "the heavens favour the enterprise which my Madeline conceived. Should the storm increase, there is hope—it is possible—it will be accomplished." And, while he yet spoke, the lightning glared along the walls of the castle, and the loud thunder pealed over the battlements. Yet Madeline wept, and repented that she had spoken of the possibility of deliverance.

As it drew towards midnight, the terrors of the storm increased, and the fierce hail poured down in sheets and rattled upon the earth; the thunder almost incessantly roared louder and more loud; or, when it ceased, the angry wind moaned through the woods, like a chained giant in the grasp of an enemy; and the impenetrable darkness was rendered more dismal by the blue glare of the lightning flashing to and fro.

Silently the castle gate was unbarred; and Sir William, throwing himself into the saddle, dashed his spurs into the sides of his courser, which bounded off at its utmost speed, followed by the adieus of his countrymen and the prayers and the tears of Madeline. The gate was scarce barred behind him ere he was dashing through the midst of the Scottish host. But the noise of the warring elements drowned the trampling of his horse's feet, or, where they were indistinctly heard for a few moments, the sound had ceased, and the horse and its rider were invisible, ere the sentinels, who had sought refuge from the fury of the storm in the tents, could perceive them.

He passed through the Scottish lines in safety; and, proceeding by way of Morpeth and Newcastle, on the third day he reached the camp of King Edward, near Knaresborough. The gay and chivalrous monarch, at the head of a portion of his army, like a true knight, hastened to the relief of his distressed cousin.

David, however, having heard of the approach of Edward at the head of an army more numerous than his own, and his nobles representing to him that the rich and weighty booty which they had taken in their inroad into England, together with the oxen and the horses, would be awkward incumbrances in a battle, he reluctantly abandoned the

siege of the castle and commenced his march toward Jed Forest, about six hours before the arrival of Edward and Sir William Montague.

Madeline took the hand of her lover as he entered, and tears of silent joy fell down her cheeks; but the Countess forgot to thank him, in her eagerness to display her beauty and her gratitude in the eyes of her sovereign and kinsman. The young monarch gazed, enraptured, on the fair face of his lovely cousin; and it was evident, while he gazed in her eyes, he thought not of gentle Philippa, the wife of his boyhood; nor was it less evident that she, flattered by the gallantry of her princely relative, forgot her absent husband, though in the presence of his brother. Edward, finding that it would be imprudent to follow the Scottish army into the forest, addressing the Countess, said—"Our knights expected, fair coz, to have tried the temper of their lances on the Scottish shields, but as it may not be, in honour of your deliverance, to-morrow we proclaim a tournament to be held in the castle-yard, when each true knight shall prove, on the morion of his antagonist, whose ladye-love is the fairest."

The eyes of the Countess flashed joy; and she smiled, well pleased at the proposal of the sovereign; but Madeline trembled as she heard it.

Early on the following morning, the castle-yard was fitted up for the tournament. The monarch and the Countess were seated on a dais covered with a purple canopy, and the latter held in her hand a ring which gleamed as a morning star, and which the monarch had taken from his finger, that she might bestow it upon the victor. Near their feet, sat Madeline, an unwilling spectator of the conflict. The names of the combatants were known to the pursuivants only, and each entered the lists armed with lance and spear, with their visors down, and having, for defence, a shield, a sort of cuirass, the helmet, gauntlet, and gorget. Several knights had been wounded and many dismounted; but the interest of the day turned upon the combat of two who already had each discomfited three. They contended long and keenly; their strength, their skill, their activity seemed equal. Victory hung suspended between them.

"Our ladye!" exclaimed the monarch, rising with delight; 'but they fight bravely! Who may they be? Were it it not that he cannot yet be in England, I should say the knight in dark armour is Sir John Aubrey."

Madeline uttered a suppressed scream, and cast round a look of mingled agony and surprise at the monarch; but the half stifled cry was drowned by the spectators, who, at that moment, burst into a shout; the knight in dark armour was unhorsed—his conqueror suddenly placed his lance to his breast, but as suddenly withdrew it; and, stretching out his mailed hand to the other, said—"Rise, mine equal! twas thy horse's fault, and none of thine, that chance gave me the victory, though I wished it much." The conqueror of the day approached the canopy beneath which the monarch and the Countess sat, and, kneeling before the dais, received the ring from her hands. While she had held the splendid bauble in her hands during the contest, conscious of her own beauty, of which Border minstrel and foreign troubadour had sung, she expected, on placing it in the hands of the victor, to behold it in homage laid again at her feet. But it was not so. The knight, on receiving it, bowed his head, and, stepping back again, knelt before the more lowly seat of Madeline.

"Accept this, dear Madeline," whispered he; and she blushed and startled at the voice which she knew and loved. The Countess cast a glance of envy on her companion as she beheld the victor at her feet; yet it was but one, which passed away as the young monarch poured his practised flatteries in her ear.

The King commanded that the two last combatants should raise their visors. The victor, still standing by the side of Madeline, obeyed. It was Sir William Montague.

"Ha! Montague!" said the monarch, "is it you? Well, for your gallant bearing to-day, you shall accompany us to France—we shall need such hands as thine to secure the sceptre of our lawful kingdom. But what modest flower is this that ye deck with your hard-won diamond?" added he, glancing towards Madeline; and, without waiting a reply, he turned to the Countess, saying, "Is she of thy suite, dear coz? She hath a fair face, worthy the handmaiden of Beauty's Queen."

The Countess liked not his inquiries; but, nevertheless, was flattered by the compliment with which he concluded; and she replied, that she was the orphan daughter of her father's friend, and the worshipful divinity of Sir William. The other combatant now approached also; and, kneeling in front of the dais, raised his visor.

"Aubrey!" exclaimed the monarch.

"My brother!" cried Madeline, starting to his side.

"Your brother?" responded Sir William.

"What! my little Madeline, a woman!" replied the stranger. "Bless thee, my own sister!"

"What!" exclaimed the monarch, "the paragon of our tournament, the sister of bold Aubrey!—And you, too, the combatant against her chosen champion! Had ye spilled blood on either side, this day's sport might have spoiled a bridal. But whence come ye, Aubrey, and when?"

"My liege," replied the other, "having arrived at Knaresborough on the day after the departure of your Majesty, I hastened hither to inform your Grace that France lies open to our arms, and our troops are eager to embark."

In a few days, Edward left Wark, leaving behind him a powerful garrison for the defence of the Castle, but he had left it desolate to poor Madeline, for he had taken to accompany him, on his invasion of France, her betrothed husband and her brother. That brother whom she had met but three days before, she had not seen from childhood—nor was she certain that he lived—for he had been a soldier from his boyhood, and his life had been spent in the camp and in foreign wars, while she had been nurtured under the protection of the Countess of Salisbury.

It was about seven years after the events we have alluded to had occurred, that Edward, covered with all the fame of a conqueror, if not the advantages of conquest, returned to England. During his victories and the din of war, however, he had not forgotten the beauty of his fair cousin, whose glances had bewildered him at Wark Castle; and now, when he returned, his admiration was renewed, and she appeared as the first favourite of his court. He had provided a royal banquet for the nobles and the knights who had distinguished themselves during the French wars. A thousand lights blazed in the noble hall—martial music peeled around—and hundreds of the brightest eyes in England looked love and delight. The fairest and the noblest in the land thronged the assembly. Jewels sparkled, and studded the gorgeous apparel of the crowd. In the midst of the hall, walked the gay and courtly monarch, with the fair Joan of Salisbury resting on his arm. They spoke of their first meeting at Wark, of the siege and the tournament, and again they whispered, and hands were pressed, and looks exchanged; and, while they walked together, a blue garter, decked with gold, pearls, and precious stones, and which, with a golden buckle, had fastened the sandal of the fair Joan round the best turned ankle in the hall, became loose and entangled among her feet. The Countess blushed; and the monarch, with the easy unembarrassment and politeness of a practised gallant, stooped to fasten the unfortunate ribbon. As the nobles beheld the sovereign kneel with the foot of the fair Countess on his knee, a hardly suppressed smile ran through the assembly. But, observing the smile upon the face of his nobles, the monarch rose proudly, and, with the garter in his hand, exclaimed, "*Honi soit qui may pense!*"—"Shame be to him who thinks ill of it!" and

buckling the garter round his left knee, he added—"Be this the order of St George!—and the proudest monarchs and most valiant knights in Christendom shall be proud to be honoured with the emblem of thy garter, fair coz."

Scarce however, was the royal banquet closed, when the voice of lamentation was heard in every house, though the mourners went not about the streets; for the living feared to follow their dead to the sepulchre. The angel of death breathed upon the land—he stretched out his wings and covered it—at his breath the land sickened—beneath the shadow of his wings the people perished. The green fields became as a wilderness, and death and desolation reigned in the market places. Along the streets moved cavalcades of the dead—the hearse of the noble and the car of the citizen; and the dead bodies of the poor were picked up upon the streets! The churchyards rose as hills, and fields were turned up for the dead! The husband fled from his dying wife; the mother feared to kiss her own child; and the bridegroom turned in terror from her who was to have been his bride upon the morn. There was no cry heard but—"The Dead!—the Dead!" The plague walked in silence, sweeping its millions from the earth, laughing at the noisy slaughter of the sword, making kings to tremble, and trampling upon conquerors as dust.

Such was the state of London, when Sir William Montague and Sir John Aubrey arrived from France. In every street, they met the long trains of the dead being borne to their grave; but the living had deserted them; and, if they met an occasional passenger, fear and paleness were upon his face. They hurried along the streets in silence—for each would have concealed his thoughts from the other—but the thoughts of both were of Madeline; and the one trembled lest he should find his betrothed, the other his sister, with the dead! They proceeded to the house of the Duchess of Salisbury; but they were told that she had fled to seek a place of refuge from the destroying glance of the pestilence. From the domestics, however, they learned that Madeline had ceased to be the companion of the Duchess; but they were also directed where they would find her with a friend in the city—if she yet lived! But, added their informants, they had heard that, in the street which they named, the inhabitants died faster than the living could bury them. When the haughty Joan became the acknowledged favourite of the King, she was no longer a meet friend or protector to the gentle Madeline; and the latter had taken up her residence in the house of a merchant, who, in his youth, had fought by her father's side; and where, if she enjoyed not the splendour and the luxuries of wealth, neither was she clothed with the trappings of shame.

With anxious steps the betrothed husband and the brother hastened to the dwelling of the merchant. They reached it.

Doth Madeline Aubrey reside here?" inquired they in the same breath. "Does she live?—Does she live?"

"She doth reside here," answered the citizen, "and—the saints be praised!—good Madeline hath escaped, with my whole house; and I believe it is for her sake, though she feareth no more the breath of the pestilence, than though it were healthsome as the summer breeze bearing the fragrance of the May-thorn. But, belike, ye would speak with her, gentlemen—ye may step in, good sirs, and wait till she return."

Her brother started back.

"Gracious Heaven! can my Madeline be abroad at a time like this!" exclaimed Sir William, "when men tremble to meet each other, and the hands of friends convey contagion! Can ye inform us, good man where we shall find her?"

"Nay, that I cannot," answered he; 'for, as I have told ye, sweet Madeline feareth not the plague, but walketh abroad as though it existed not: and now doubtless, she is soothing the afflicted, or handing a cup of water to the dying stranger, whom his own kindred have fled from and forsaken when the evil came upon him. But, as ye seem acquainted with her, will not ye tarry till she come?"

They gazed towards each other with horror and with fear; yet, in the midst of their apprehensions and dismay, each admired the more than courage of her of whom Joan Plantagenet had said that she had more wisdom of head than boldness of heart. They entered the house, and they sat down together in silence. Slowly, wearily the moments passed on, each strengthening anxiety, each pregnant with agony.

"She may never return!" groaned Sir William; "for the healthy have been smitten down upon the streets; and the wretched hirelings, who make a harvest of death, have borne to the same grave the dying with the dead!"

At length, a light footstep was heard upon the stairs. They started to their feet. The door opened, and Madeline, more beautiful than ever they had beheld her, stood before them.

"My own!—my Madeline!" cried Sir William, hastening to meet her.

"My sister!" exclaimed her brother.

Her head rested on the bosom of those she loved; and, in the rapture of the moment, the pestilence and the desolation that reigned around were forgotten. At length, the danger to which she had exposed herself recurring to his mind—

"Let us flee from this horrid charnel-house, dearest," said Sir William, "to where our bridal may not be mingled with sights of wo, and where the pestilence pursueth not its victims. Come, my own—my betrothed—my Madeline—let us haste away."

"Wherefore would my William fly?" said she—and a smile of joy and of confidence played upon her lips; "have ye not defied death from the sword and the spear, and braved it as it sped with the swift flying arrow, and would ye turn and flee from the pestilence which worketh only what the sword performs, and what chivalry requires as a sacrifice to the madness of woman's folly? But whither would you flee to escape it? Be it south or north, it is there; and east or west, it is there also. If ye flee from the pestilence, would ye flee also from the eye of Him who sends it?"

Again they urged her to leave the city; and again she endeavoured to smile; but it died languidly on her lip—the rose on her cheek vanished, and her mild eyes in a moment became dim. She sank her head upon the bosom of her lover, and her hand rested on the shoulder of her brother. The contagion had entered her heart. A darkening spot gathered upon her fair cheek—it was the shadow of the finger of death—the seal of eternity!

"My Madeline!" cried Sir William—"merciful Heaven!—spare her! spare her!"

"Oh, my sister!" exclaimed her brother, "have I hastened to my native land, but to behold thee die?"

She feebly pressed their hands in hers—"Leave me—leave me, loved ones!—my William!—my brother!—flee from me!—there is death in the touch of your Madeline!—We shall meet again!"

The plague-spot darkened on her cheek; and, in a few hours, Madeline Aubrey was numbered with its victims.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE SEEKER.

AMONGST the many thousand readers of these tales, there are, perhaps, few who have not observed that the object of the writer is frequently of a higher kind than that of merely contributing to their amusement. He would wish "to point a moral," while he endeavours to "adorn a tale." It is with this view that he now lays before them the history of a SEEKER. The first time he remembers hearing, or rather of noticing the term, was in a conversation with a living author respecting the merits of a popular poet, when his religious opinions being adverted to, it was mentioned that, in a letter to a brother poet of equal celebrity, he described himself as a SEEKER. I was struck with the word and its application. I had never met with the fool who saith in his heart that there is no God; and, though I had known many deniers of Revelation, yet a SEEKER, in the sense in which the word was applied, appeared a new character. But, on reflection, I found it an epithet applicable to thousands, and adopted it as a title to our present story.

Richard Storie was the eldest son of a Dissenting minister, who had the pastoral charge of a small congregation a few miles from Hawick. His father was not what the world calls a man of talent, but he possessed what is far beyond talents—piety and humility. In his own heart he felt his Bible to be true—its words were as a lamp within him—and from his heart he poured forth its doctrines, its hopes, and consolations, to others, with a fervour and an earnestness which FAITH only can inspire. It is not the thunder of declamation, the pomp of eloquence, the majesty of rhetoric, the rounded period, and the glow of imagery, which can chain the listening soul, and melt down the heart of the unbeliever, as metals yield to the heat of the furnace. Shew me the hoary-headed preacher, who carries sincerity in his very look and in his very tones, who is animated because faith inspires him, and out of the fulness of his own heart his mouth speaketh, and there is the man from whose tongue truth floweth as from the lips of an apostle; and the small still voice of conscience echoes to his words, while hope burns and the judgment becomes convinced. Where faith is not in the preacher, none will be produced in the hearer. Such a man was the father of Richard Storie. He had fulfilled his vows, and prayed with and for his children. He set before them the example of a Christian parent, and he rejoiced to perceive that that example was not lost upon them.

We pass over the earlier years of Richard Storie, as during that period he had not become a SEEKER, nor did he differ from other children of his age. There was, indeed, a thoughtfulness and sensibility about his character; but these were by no means so remarkable as to require particular notice, nor did they mark his boyhood in a peculiar degree. The truths which from his childhood he had been accustomed to hear from his father's lips, he had never doubted; but he felt their truth as he felt his father's love, for both had been imparted to him together. He had fixed upon the profession of a surgeon, and, at the age of eighteen, he was sent to Edinburgh to attend the classes. He was a zealous student, and his progress realized the fondest wishes and anticipations of his parent. It was during his second session that Richard was induced, by some of his fellow collegians, to become a member of a debating society. It was composed of many bold and ambitious young men, who, in the confidence of their hearts, rashly dared to meddle with things too high for them. There were many amongst them who regarded it as a proof of manliness to avow their scepticism, and who gloried in scoffing at the eternal truths which had lighted the souls of their fathers, when the darkness of death fell upon their eyelids. It is one of the besetting sins of youth to appear wise above what is written. There were many such amongst those with whom Richard Storie now associated. From them he first heard the truths which had been poured into his infant ear from his father's lips attacked, and the tongue of the scoffer rail against them. His first feeling was horror, and he shuddered at the impiety of his friends. He rose to combat their objections and refute their arguments, but he withdrew not from the society of the wicked. Week succeeded week, and he became a leading member of the club. He was no longer filled with horror at the bold assertions of the avowed sceptic, nor did he manifest disgust at the ribald jest. As night silently and imperceptibly creeps through the air, deepening shade on shade, till the earth lies buried in its darkness, so had the gloom of *Doubt* crept over his mind, deepening and darkening, till his soul was bewildered in the sunless wilderness.

The members acted as chairman of the society in rotation, and, in his turn, the office fell upon Richard Storie. For the first time, he seemed to feel conscious of the darkness in which his spirit was enveloped; conscience haunted him as a hound followeth its prey; and still its small still voice whispered —

"Who sitteth in the scorner's chair."

The words seemed burning on his memory. He tried to forget them, to chase them away—to speak of, to listen to other things; but he could not—"*Who sitteth in the scorner's chair*" rose upon his mind as if printed before him—as if he heard the words from his father's tongue—as though they would rise to his own lips. He was troubled—his conscience smote him—the darkness in which his soul was shrouded was made visible. He left his companions—he hastened to his lodgings and wept. But his tears brought not back the light which had been extinguished within him, nor restored the hopes which the pride and the rashness of reason had destroyed, He had become the willing prisoner of *Doubt*, and it now held him in its cold and iron grasp, struggling in despair.

Reason, or rather the self-sufficient arrogance of fancied talent which frequently assumes its name, endeavoured to suppress the whisperings of conscience in his breast; and in such a state of mind was Richard Storie, when he was summoned to attend the deathbed of his father. It was winter, and the snow lay deep on the ground, and there was no conveyance to Hawick until the following day; but, ere the morrow came, eternity might be between him and his parent. He had wandered from the doctrines that parent had taught, but no blight had yet fallen on the affections of his heart. He hurried forth on foot; and, having travelled all night in

sorrow and in anxiety, before daybreak he arrived at the home of his infancy. Two of the elders of the congregation stood before the door.

"Ye are just in time, Mr Richard," said one of them mournfully, "for he'll no be lang now; and he has prayed earnestly that he might only be spared till ye arrived."

Richard wept aloud.

"Oh, try and compose yoursel, dear sir," said the elder. "Your distress may break the peace with which he's like to pass away. It's a sair trial, nae doubt—a visitation to us a'—but ye ken, Richard, we must not mourn as those who have no hope."

"Hope!" groaned the agonized son as he entered the house. He went towards the room where his father lay—his mother and his brethren sat weeping around the bed.

"Richard!" said his afflicted mother, as she rose and flung her arms around his neck. The dying man heard the name of his first-born, his languid eyes brightened, he endeavoured to raise himself upon his pillow, he stretched forth his feeble hand.—"Richard!—my own Richard!" he exclaimed; "ye hae come, my son—my prayer is heard, and I can die in peace! I longed to see ye, for my spirit was troubled upon yer account—sore and sadly troubled; for there were expressions in yer last letter that made me tremble—that made me fear that the pride o' human learning was lifting up the heart o' my bairn, and leading his judgment into the dark paths o' error and unbelief—but, oh! those tears are not the tears of an unbeliever!"

He sank back exhausted. Richard trembled. He again raised his head.

"Get the books," said he, feebly, "and Richard will make worship. It is the last time we shall all join together in praise on this earth, and it will be the last time I shall hear the voice o' my bairn in prayer, and it is long since I heard it. Sing the hymn,

'The hour of my departure's come,'

and read the twenty-third psalm."

Richard did as his dying parent requested; and, as he knelt by the bedside, and lifted up his voice in prayer, his conscience smote him, agony pierced his soul, and his tongue faltered. He now became a SEEKER, seeking mercy and truth at the same moment: and, in the agitation of his spirit, his secret thoughts were revealed, his doubts were manifested! A deep groan issued from the dying bed. The voice of the supplicant failed him—his *Amen* died upon his lips—he started to his feet in confusion.

"My son! my son!" feebly cried the dying man; "ye hae lifted yer eyes to the mountains o' vanity, and the pride o' reason has darkened yer heart, but, as yet, it has not hardened it. O Richard! remember the last words o' yer dying faither—'Seek, and ye shall find.' Pray with an humble and a contrite heart, and in yer last hour ye will hae, as I hae now, a licht to guide ye through the dark valley of the shadow of death."

He called his wife and his other children around him—he blessed them—he strove to comfort them—he committed them to His care, who is the Husband of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless. The lustre that lighted up his eyes for a moment, as he besought a blessing on them, vanished away, his head sank back upon his pillow, a low moan was heard, and his spirit passed into peace.

His father's death threw a blight upon the prospects of Richard. He no longer possessed the means of prosecuting his studies; and, in order to support himself, and assist his mother, he engaged himself as tutor in the family of a gentleman in East Lothian. But there his doubts followed him, and melancholy sat upon his breast. He had thoughtlessly, almost imperceptibly, stepped into the gloomy paths of unbelief, and anxiously he groped to retrace his steps; but it was as a blind man stumbles; and, in wading through the maze of controversy for a guide, his way became more intricate, and the darkness of his mind more intense. He repented that he had ever listened to the words of the scoffer, or sat in the chair of the scorner; but he had permitted the cold mists of scepticism to gather round his mind, till even the affections of his heart became blighted by their influence. He was now a solitary man, shunning society; and at those hours when his pupils were not under his charge, he would wander alone in the wood or by the river, brooding over unutterable thoughts, and communing with despair—for he sought not, as is the manner of many, to instil the poison that had destroyed his own peace into the minds of others. He carried his punishment in his soul, and was silent—in the soul that was doubting its own existence! Of all hypochondriacs, to me the unbeliever seems the most absurd. For, can matter think, can it reason, can it doubt? Is it not the thing that doubts which distrusts its own being? Often when he so wandered, the last words of his father—"Seek, and ye shall find"—were whispered in his heart, as though the spirit of the departed breathed them over him. Then would he raise his hands in agony, and his prayer rose from the solitude of the woods.

After acting about two years as tutor, he returned to Edinburgh, and completed his studies. Having, with difficulty, from the scantiness of his means, obtained his diplomas, he commenced practice in his native village. His brothers and his sisters had arrived at manhood and womanhood, and his mother enjoyed a small annuity. Almost from boyhood, he had been deeply attached to Agnes Brown, the daughter of a neighbouring farmer; and, about three years after he had commenced practice, she bestowed on him her hand. She was all that his heart could wish—meek, gentle, and affectionate—and her anxious love threw a gleam of sunshine over the melancholy that had settled upon his soul. Often, when he fondly gazed in her eyes, where affection beamed, the hope of immortality would flash through his bosom—for one so good, so made of all that renders virtue dear, but to be born to die and to be no more, he deemed impossible. They had been married about nine years, and Agnes had become the mother of five fair children, when, in one day, Death entered their dwelling, and robbed them of two of their little ones. Their neighbours had gathered together to comfort them, and the mother in silent anguish wept over her babes; but the father stood tearless and stricken with grief, as though his hopes were sealed up in the coffin of his children. In his agony, he uttered words of strange meaning. The doubts of the SEEKER burst forth in the accents of despair. The neighbours gazed at each other. They had before had doubts of the religious principles of Dr Storie—now those doubts were confirmed. In the bitterness of his grief, he had spoken of the grave as the eternal prison of the dead—and of futurity and a resurrection as things he hoped for, but believed not.

His words were circulated through the village, and over the country—and, as they spread, they were exaggerated. Many began to regard him as an unsafe man to visit a death-bed, where he might attempt to rob the dying of the everlasting hope which enables them to triumph over the last enemy. His practice fell off, and the wants of his family increased. He was no longer able to maintain an appearance of respectability; his coat had assumed a melancholy hue; and he gave up assembling with his family amidst the congregation over which his father had been pastor. His circumstances aggravated the gloom of his mind; and, for a time, he became not a SEEKER, but one who abandoned himself to callousness and despair. Even the affection of his wife—which knew no change, but rather increased as affliction and misfortune came upon them—with the smiles and affection of his children, became irksome. Their love increased his misery. His own house was all but forsaken, and the blacksmith's shop became his consulting room, the village alehouse his laboratory. Misery and contempt heightened

the "shadows, clouds, and darkness," which rested on his mind. To his anguish and excitement he had now added habits of intemperance—his health became a wreck, and he sank upon his bed, a miserable and a ruined man. The shadow of death seemed lowering over him, and he lay trembling, shrinking from its approach, shuddering and brooding over the cheerless, the horrible thought—*annihilation!* But, even then, his poor Agnes watched over him with a love stronger than death. She strove to cheer him with the thought that he would still live—that they would again be happy. "O my husband!" cried she, fondly, "yield not to despair—*seek, and ye shall find!*"

"O heavens, Agnes!" exclaimed he, "I have sought!—I have sought! I have been a SEEKER until now; but Truth flees from me; Hope mocks me, and the terrors of Death only find me!"

"Kneel with me, my children," she cried; "let us pray for mercy and peace of mind for your poor father?"—And the fond wife and her offspring knelt around the bed where her husband lay. A gleam of joy passed over the sick man's countenance, as the voice of her supplication rose upon his ear, and a ray of hope fell upon his heart. "*Amen!*" he uttered as she arose; and "*Amen!*" responded their children.

On the bed of sickness, his heart had been humbled; he had, as it were, seen death face to face, and the nearer it approached, the stronger assurances did he feel of the immortality he had dared to doubt. He arose from his bed a new man—hope illumined, and faith began to glow in his bosom. His doubts were vanquished, his fears dispelled. He had sought, and at length found—found the joys and the hopes of the Christian. He regained the esteem of men, and again prospered; and this was the advice of the SEEKER to his children—"*Avoid trusting to reason when it would flatter you with your own wisdom; for it begetteth doubt—doubt, unbelief—unbelief, despair—and despair, death!*"

THE SIEGE.

A DRAMATIC TALE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.—SIR ALEXANDER SETON, Governor of Berwick: RICHARD and HENRY, his Sons. PROVOST RAMSAY. HUGH ELLIOT, a Traitor. KING EDWARD. EARL PERCY. MATILDA, Wife of Seton, &c.

SCENE I.—*A Street—the Market-Place.*

Enter SIR ALEXANDER SETON, RICHARD *and* HENRY, (*his Sons,*) PROVOST RAMSAY, HUGH ELLIOT, *and others of the People.*

Provost Ramsay.—Brither Scotchmen! it is my fixed an' solemn opinion, that the King o' England has entered into a *holy alliance* wi' the Enemy o' Mankind! An' does he demand us to surrender!—to gie up our toun!—our property!—our lives!—our liberty! to Southern pagans, that hae entered into compact wi' the powers o' the air. Surrender!—no, Scotchmen! While we breathe, we will breathe the *breath o' Freedom!* as it soughs down the Tweed, between the heathery hills o' our ain auld country!—I am but Provost o' Berwick, Sir Alexander, an' ye are its Governor; an', in a time like this, the power o' defending or surrendering the gates is yours; but, though ye gie up the keys this very hour, an' were every stane o' the walls turned ane upon anither—here!—the power to defend this market-place is mine!—and *here* will I stand, while this hand can wield a sword, or a Scotchman is left to die by my side!

Sir Alex.—Fear not, good Provost; I through life have learned
To live with honour, or with honour fall?

Richard.—And as the father dies, so shall his sons!
What sayest thou, Henry?

Henry.—I would say but this—
(If one with a smooth chin may have a voice)—
When thou dost nobly fall, I'll but survive
To strike revenge—then follow thy example.

Provost Ramsay.—Bravely said, callants! As sure as death, I wish ye were my sons! Do ye ken, Sir Alexander, the only thing that grieves me, in a day like this, is, that I hae naebody to die for the glory an' honour o' auld Scotland, but mysel. But, save us, neebor Elliot! ye look as douf an' as dowie-like, as if ye had been forced to mak yer breakfast o' yer coat-sleeve.

Hugh Elliot.—In truth, methinks, this is no time for smiles—
In every street, each corner of the town,
Struck by some unseen hand, the dead are strewed;
From every house the children's wail is heard,
Screaming in vain for food; and the poor mother,
Worn to a skeleton, sits groaning by!
My house, 'tis known, o'erlooks the battlements;
'Tis not an hour gone that I left my couch,
Hastening to speed me hither, when a sound,
Fierce as the thunders, shook our firm-built walls—
The casements fell in atoms, and the bed,
Which I that moment left, rocked in confusion:
I turned to gaze on it, and I beheld!—beheld
My wife's fair bosom torn—her heart laid bare!
And the red stream came oozing to my feet!
Is this a time for smiles?

Provost Ramsay.—Your wife! Heaven preserve us!—Weel, after a', I hae reason to be thankfu' I hae neither wife nor bairns on a day like this!

Sir Alex.—Behold an envoy from the English camp,
Sent with proposals, or some crafty truce.

Hugh Elliot.—Let me entreat you, then, most noble sir,
Give him all courtesy; and, if his terms
Be such as we in honour may accept,
Refuse them not, by saying—WE WILL DIE.

Enter EARL PERCY *and* Attendants.

Percy.—Good morrow, my Scotch cousins!
My gracious sovereign, your right lawful master
Hath, in his mercy, left you these conditions—
Now to throw wide your gates, and, if ye choose,
Go walk into the Tweed, and drown your treason;
Or run, like scapegoats, to the wilderness,
Bearing your sins, and half a week's provision;
Or, should these terms not meet your approbation,
Ere midnight, we shall send some *fleeter messengers.*
So now, old Governor, my master's answer?

Provost Ramsay.—The mischief's in your impudence. But were I Sir Alexander, the only answer your master should hae, wad be your weel-bred tongue sent back upon the end o' an arrow; an' that wad be as *fleet a messenger*, as ye talk about *fleet messengers*, as ony I ken o'.

Percy.—Peace, thou barbarian! keep thy frog's throat closed.
I say, old greybeard, hast thou found an answer?

Sir Alex.—Had my Lord Percy found more fitting phrase
To couch his haughty mandate, I, perhaps,
Had found some meet reply. But, as it is,
Thou hast thine answer in this people's eyes.

Hugh Elliot.—Since we with life and honour may depart
Send not an answer that must seal our ruin,
Though it be hero-like to talk of death.

[*Enter* LADY SETON, *listening.*

Bethink thee well, Sir Governor: these men
Have wives with helpless infants at their breasts;
What husband, think ye, would behold a child
Dashed from the bosom where his head had pillowed,
That his fair wife might fill a conqueror's arms!
These men have parents, feeble, helpless, old;
Yea, men have daughters!—they have maids that love them—

Daughters and maidens chaste as the new moon—
Will they behold them screaming on the streets,
And in the broad day be despoiled by violence?
Think of *these things*, my countrymen! [*Aside* to PERCY.
Now, my Lord Percy, you may read your answer.
Percy, [*aside.*]—So! thou art disaffected, good Sir Orator—
Well, ply thy wits, and Edward will reward thee—
Though, for my part, I'd knight thee with a halter!
Sir Alex.—Is this thy counsel in the hour of peril,
Milk-hearted man! To thee, and all like thee,
I offer terms more *generous* still than Edward's:
Depart ye by the Scotch or English gate—
Both shall be opened. Lade your beasts of burden—
Take all you have—your food, your filthy gold,
Your wives, your children, parents, and yourselves!—
Go to our Scottish King, and prate of courage!
Or go to Edward—Percy will conduct thee.
[LADY SETON *advances forward.*
Lady Seton.—Spoke like thyself, my husband!
Out on thee, slave! [*To* ELLIOT.
Or shall I call thee traitor! What didst thou
On finishing thy *funeral service*, whisper
In my Lord Percy's ear?
Elliot.—I whisper, lady?
Lady Seton.—You whisper, smooth-tongued sir!
Percy, [*aside.*]—Zounds! by the coronet of broad Northumberland,
Could I exchange it for fair England's crown,
I'd have my body-guard of women's eyes,
And make the whole sex sharp-shooters!
Provost Ramsay.—Waes me! friend Elliot, but you have an unco dumfoundered-like look, after that speech o' yours in defence o' liberty, and infants, and fair bosoms, maiden screams, and grey hairs, and what not.
Sir Alex.—Percy, we hear no terms but death or liberty—This is our answer.
Percy.—Well, cousins, be it so. The wilful dog—
As runs the proverb. Lady, fare-ye-well. [*Exit.*
Sir Alex.—On with me, friends!—on to the southern rampart!
There, methinks, they meditate a breach. On, Scotsmen! on—
For Freedom and for Scotland! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Town Ramparts. Enter* SIR ALEXANDER, RICHARD, HENRY, PROVOST RAMSAY, HUGH ELLIOT, *and* Populace.

Sir Alex.—To-day, my townsmen, I shall be your leader;
And though my arms may lack their wonted vigour,
Here are my pledges [*pointing to his sons*] placed on either side,
That seal a triumph youth could never reap.
To-day, my sons, beneath a father's eye,
Oh, give such pride of feeling to his heart,
As shall outshame the ardour of his youth,
And nerve his arm with power strong as his zeal!
[*Exeunt all, save* HUGH ELLIOT.
Elliot.—Thanks to my destiny!—the hour is come—
The wished for hour of vengeance on mine enemy!—
Heavens! there is neither nobleness nor virtue,
Nor any quality that beggars boast not,
But he and his smooth sons have swallowed up;
And all the world must mouth their bravery!—
I owe a debt to Scotland, and to him!
And I'll repay it!—I'll repay it now!
This letter will I shoot to Edward's camp—
And now, ere midnight, I'm revenged!—revenged!
[LADY SETON *appears from the window of the Castle, as* ELLIOT *is fixing a letter on an arrow.*
Lady Seton, [*from the window.*]—Hold, traitor! hold!
Or, by the powers above us, this very hour
Your body o'er these battlements shall hang
For your fair friends to shoot at! [ELLIOT *drops the bow.*
Elliot, [*aside.*]—Now fleet destruction seize the lynx-eyed fiend—
Trapped in the moment that insured success!
Thank fate—my dagger's left!—she has a son!
Lady Seton.—Go, worthless recreant, and in thickest fight
Blot out thy guilty purpose—know thy life
Depends on this day's daring, and its deeds
And wounds alone, won in the onset's brunt,
Secures my silence.
Elliot.—You wrong me, noble lady.
Lady Seton.—Away! I'll hear thee not, nor let my ears
List to the accents of a traitor's tongue. [*Exit Elliot.*

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in* KING EDWARD'S *Tent. Enter* EDWARD *and* PERCY.

Edward.—Well, my Lord Percy, thou hast made good speed—
What say these haughty burghers to our clemency?
Percy.—In truth your grace, they are right *haughty* burghers.
One wondrous civil gentleman proposed
To write his answer on your servant's tongue—
Using his sword as clerks might do a quill—
Then thrust it on an arrow for a post-boy!
Edward.—Such service he shall meet. What said their governor?
Percy.—Marry! the old boy said I was no gentleman—
And bid me read my answer in the eyes
Of—Heaven defend me!—such a squalid crew!
One looked like death run from his winding-sheet—
Another like an ague clothed in rags—
A third had something of the human form,
But every bone was cursing at its fellow.
Now, though I vow that I could read my fate
In every damsel's eyes that kissed a moonbeam,
I've yet to learn the meaning of the words
Wrote on the eyeballs of his vellum-spectres.
But the old man is henpecked!
Edward.—Prythee, Lord Percy, lay thy fool's tongue
And tell thy meaning plainly.
Percy.—Nay, pardon me, your majesty; I wot
Your servant is the fool his father made him,
And the most dutiful of all your subjects.
Edward.—We know it, Percy. But what of his wife?
Percy.—Why, if the men but possess half her spirit,
You may besiege these walls till you have counted
The grey hairs on the child that's born next June.
Edward.—And was this all?
Percy.—Nay, there was one—a smooth-tongued oil man,
A leader of the citizens; and one
Who measures out dissension by the rood;
He is an orator, and made a speech
Against the Governor—the people murmured,
And one or two cried out, "Behold an Anthony!"
But he's a traitor, and I'd hang all traitors!
Edward.—Ha!—then doth the devil, Disaffection,
With his fair first-born, Treason, smooth our path.
So we have friends within the citadel.
Sent they no other answer?
Percy.—I did expect me to have brought the whole,
Like half-clothed beggars, bending at my heels,
To crave your grace's succour; but, behold,
Ere I could bid them home for a clean shirt,
That they might meet your majesty like Christians
Out stepped her ladyship, and with a speech
Roused up the whole to such a flood of feeling
That I did well 'scape drowning in the shout
Of Scotland and Seton!—Seton and Scotland!—
Then did she turn and ask me—"Are you answered?

I said I was!—and they did raise a cry
Of *Death or liberty!*—
Edward.—They shall have it—death in its fullest meaning.
Haste, ply our cannon on the opening breach.
Forth!—they attack the camp! Now, drive them back,
Break through their gate and guards,
Till all be ours! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*The Ramparts.* Scots *driven through the gates in confusion.*

Sir Alex.—Wo to thee, Elliot! this defeat is thine.
Where was the caution ye but preached this morn,
That ye should madly break our little band,
And rush on certain ruin? Fie on thee, man!
That such an old head is so young a soldier!
Here, guard this breach, defend it to the last;
Henry shall be thy comrade. On, my friends!
They cross the river, and the northern gate
Will be their next attack.
Elliot, [*aside.*]—"Wo to thee, Elliot! this defeat is thine!"
So says our Governor! 'Tis true!—*'twas* mine!
Though I have failed me in my firm, fixed purpose,
Once more he's thrown revenge within my grasp;
And I will clutch it, clutch it firmly, too;
I guard the breach! and with his son to assist me!—
The Fates grow kind! The *breach!* he said the *breach!*
And gave his son up to the power of Edward!
Henry.—Why stand ye musing there? *Here* lies your duty!
Elliot, [*aside.*]—'Tis true! tis true! *my duty* DOES *lie there!*
Henry.—Follow me, Elliot. See—they scale the walls!
A moment lost, and they have gained the battlement.
[*Shouting.*—PERCY *and* Followers *leap upon the battlement.*
Percy.—On! followers, on!—for Edward and for England.
Henry.—Have at thee, Percy, and thy followers, too!
For freedom and for Scotland! On, Elliot! on!
Wipe out the morning's shame.
Elliot, [*aside.*]—Have at thee, boy, for insult and revenge!
[ELLIOT *strikes* HENRY'S *sword from his hand.*
Henry.—Shame on thee, traitor! are we thus betrayed!
[Percy's Followers *make* HENRY *prisoner.*
Elliot.—Thank Heaven! thank Heaven!—one then is in their grasp!
A truce, Lord Percy. See thy prisoner safe,
Ere his mad father sound a rescue—off!
Thou wouldst not draw thy sword upon a friend?
[SIR ALEXANDER, RICHARD, PROVOST RAMSAY, *and others, enter hurriedly.*
Sir Alex.—Thanks, Elliot! thanks! You have done nobly!—thanks!
Where is your comrade!—speak—where is my son?
Elliot.—Would he had been less valiant, less brave!
Sir Alex.—What! is he dead, my good, my gallant boy!
Where is his body? shew me—where? oh, where?
Richard.—Where is my brother? tell me how he fell.
Elliot.—Could I with my best blood have saved the youth,
Ye are all witnesses that I would have done it.
Provost Ramsay.—Indeed, Mr Elliot, if ye refer to me, I'm witness to naething o' the kind; for it is my solemn opinion, a' the execution your sword did was as feckless as a winnle-strae.
Sir Alex.—Where is my poor boy's body?
Elliot.—I did not say he died!
Richard.—Not dead!
Sir Alex.—Not say he died?
Elliot.—See yonder group now hurrying to the camp
And shouting as they run.—He is their prisoner!
[*Aside.*] Feed ye, friends, on that.

Sir Alex.—Cold-blooded man! thou never were a father!
The tyrant is!—he knows a father's heart!
And he will play the butcher's part with mine
Each day inflicting on me many deaths,
Knowing right well I am his twofold prisoner
For on the son's head he'll repay, with interest.
The wrongs the father did him!
"He is their prisoner," saidst thou? "Is their prisoner!"
Thou hast no sons!—none!—I forgive thee, Elliot!
Elliot.—Deeply I crave your pardon, noble sir;
Pity for you, and love for Scotland, made me
That I was loath to speak the unwelcome tidings;
Fearful that to attempt his rescue now,
Had so cut off our few remaining troops,
As seal immediate ruin.
Provost Ramsay, [*aside.*]—Preserve us a'! hear that. Weel, to be sure, it's a true saying, "Satan never lets *his* saunts be at a loss for an answer!" [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Apartment in* EDWARD'S *Tent.* *Enter* EDWARD *and* PERCY.

Edward.—How fares it with these stubborn rebels now?
Do they still talk of death as of a bridal,
While we protract the ceremony?
Percy.—I learn, my liege, we've got two glorious allies.
Two most right honourable gentlemen,
Aiding the smooth-tongued orator—
Disease and *Famine* have espoused our cause,
And the said traitor, Elliot, is their oracle.
Edward.—Touching this man, we have advice from him
In which he speaketh much concerns the wants
And murmurings of the citizens; he, too,
Adds, they hold out expecting help from Douglas,
And recommendeth that we should demand
The other son of Seton as a hostage,
In virtue of a truce for fourteen days:
This is his snare. The sons once in our power,
Their father yields, or both hang up before him.
Percy.—'Tis monstrous generous of our friendly Scot;
And what return expects he for his service?
Edward.—On giving up the father's head—his place.
Percy.—I fear the lady will have his head first.
Did you but see her eyes!—
I'd bet my coronet 'gainst our friar's cowl,
Man wink not treason in his bedchamber
But she detect it. Then her ears, again;
'Sdeath! she can hear the very sound of light
As it does steal, i' the morning, through her curtains.
Should our *friend* wear his head another week,
His neck, I'll swear, is not as other men's are.
Edward.—How fares it with the son, our silent prisoner?
Percy.—Poor soul, he leans his head against the wall,
And stands with his arms thus—across his breast—
Pale as a gravestone, gnashing at his teeth,
And looking on his guards just as his mother would!
Edward.—'Tis now the hour that Elliot has proposed
To stir the townsmen up to mutiny.
Take our conditions, add *whate'er* you please—
Get but the son as hostage!—get but that!—
And both shall die a thief's death if he yield not—
He is a father, Percy—he's a father!—
The town is ours, and at an easy purchase. [*Exit.*
Percy.—And she's a mother, Edward! she's a mother!
Ay! and a mother—I will pledge my earldom,
And be but plain Hal Percy all my life,
If she despise not gallows, death, and children,
And earn for thee a crown of shame, my master!
In sooth, I am ashamed to draw my sword,
Lest I should see my face in its bright blade:
For sure my mother would not know her son,
As he goes blushing on his hangman's errand.

SCENE VI.—*A Street. The Market-Place.*
Enter ELLIOT *and* Populace.

Elliot.—You heard, my townsmen, how our gracious Governor
Did talk to us of honour!—you all heard him!
Can any of you tell us, what is *honour?*
He drinks his wine, *he* feeds on beeves and capons—
His table groans beneath a load of meats—
His hounds, *his* hawks, are fed like Christian men!
He sleeps in a downy couch, o'erhung with purple—
And these, all these are *honourable* doings!
He talks of *liberty!*
Is it then *liberty* to be cooped up
Within these prison walls, to starve from want,
That we may have the *liberty*—mark it, my friends!—
The wondrous *liberty* to call him *Governor!*
Had ye the hearts or hands your fathers had,
You'd to the castle, take the keys by force,
And ope the gates to let your children live.
Here comes your Provost, now appeal to him.

Enter PROVOST RAMSAY.—*The people demand bread.*

Provost Ramsay.—Gie you food!—your bairns dee wi' hunger!—and ye maun hae bread! It is easy saying, Gie ye! but where am I to get it? Do you think there's naebody finds the grund o' their stamachs but yersels? I'm sure I hae been blind fastin' these four-and-twenty hours! But wad ye no suffer this, and ten times mair, for liberty, and for the glory and honour of auld Scotland!

Elliot, [*to the people.*]—He, too, can cant of *liberty* and *honour!*

Provost Ramsay.—I say, Mr Hypocrite! it is my fixed and solemn opinion, that ye are at the bottom o' a' this murmuring! I ken ye're never at a loss for an answer; and there is anither wee bit affair I wad just thank ye to redd up. Do ye mind what a fine story ye made in this very market-place the ither week, about getting ower the bed—and your wife's bosom being torn bare—and the blood gushing to your feet, and a' the rest o't? Do ye mind o' that, sir? Do ye mind o' that? I daresay, townsmen, ye've no forgot it? Now, sir, it's no aboon ten minutes sine, that the poor creature, wha, according to your account, was dead and buried, got loose frae her confinement, and cam fleeing to me for protection, as a man and a magistrate, to save her frae the cruelty o' you, you scoundrel. Now, what say ye to that, sir? What say ye to that? What do ye think o' your orator now, friends?

Elliot.—'Tis false, my friends—
'Tis but a wicked calumny, devised
Against the only man who is your friend.

Provost Ramsay.—Saftly, neebor, saftly! have a care how ye gie the lee to what I say—or, it is my solemn opinion, this bit sword o' my faither's may stap you frae giein it till anither.

Enter SIR ALEXANDER *and* RICHARD.

Ye are weel come, Sir Alexander: here is Orator Elliot been makin' a harangue to the townsfolk; and ane cries for bread, and anither for meal—that it is my opinion I dinna ken what's to be done.

Sir Alex.—What would you have? what is it that you wish?
Would ye, for food, sweet friends, become all slaves;
And for a meal, that ye might surfeit on it,
Give up your wives, your homes, and all that's dear,
To the brute arms of men, who hold it virtue
To heap their shame upon a fallen foe!
Would ye, that ye might eat, yet not be satisfied,
Pick up the scanty crumbs around their camp,
After their cattle and their dogs have left them;
Or would ye, for this favour, be content
To take up arms against your countrymen!—
For this! will fathers fight against their sons?
Sons 'gainst their fathers?—brethren with each other?
Those who would wish it, may go o'er to Edward!

[*Sound of French horns without.*

Provost Ramsay.—Ay, here comes mair proposals—the sorry proposal them! I wish them and proposals an' a' were in the middle o' the Tweed.

Enter EARL PERCY *and* Attendants.

Percy.—Save ye, my band of heroes; by St Cuthbert,
Your valorous deeds have wrought a miracle
And turned my master's hatred into mercy;
For, deeming it a sin that such brave fellows
Should die a beggar's vulgar death from want,
He doth propose to drop hostilities,
And for two weeks you may command our friendship;
If, in that time, you gain no aid from Scotland,
Renounce the country, and be Edward master;
But, should you gain assistance—why, then, we
Will raise the siege, and wish you all good-by.

Elliot, [*to the people.*]—Urge the acceptance, friends, of these conditions.

Omnes.—We all accept these terms.

Sir Alex.—It is the people's wish, and I agree.

Percy.—And you, in pledge of due performance, sir,
Do give up this, your son, into our hands,
In surety for your honour——

Sir Alex.—What! my son!
Give him up, too—yield him into your power!
Have ye not one already!—No! no! no!
I cannot, my Lord Percy—no, I cannot
Part with him, too, and leave their mother childless!

Provost Ramsay.—Wad ye no tak me as a substitute, Lord Percy—I'm a man o' property and chief magistrate beside; now, I should think, I'm the maist likely person.

Percy.—Good master magistrate, and man of property,
I like thy heart, but cannot take thy person.
Give up the youth! or here must end my truce.

Richard.—Fear not, my father. I will be their hostage,
For Scotland's sake, and for my father's honour——

Sir Alex.—My boy, my boy, and I shall lose you thus!
What surety does cruel Edward give,
That, keeping faith, he will restore my sons
Back to my arms in safety? Tell me, Percy,
Gives he his honour as a man or king?

Percy.—As both, I hold it.

Sir Alex.—And wilt thou pledge thine?

Percy.—This is my master's business, and not mine.

Sir Alex.—'Tis an evasion, and I like it not.

Richard.—Farewell! farewell, my father! be the first
To teach these men the virtue of self-sacrifice.
Commend me to my mother. I will bear
Both of your best loves to our Henry.
Farewell!—Lead on, Lord Percy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII.—*Apartment in* SETON'S *House.*

Enter SIR ALEXANDER, PROVOST RAMSAY, H. ELLIOT, *and others.*

Sir Alex.—Would Heaven that all go well with my dear boys!
But there's that within me that does tear
My bosom with misgivings. The very sun
To me hangs out a sign of ominous gloom!
A spirit seems to haunt me, and the weight
Of evil, undefined, and yet unknown,
Doth, like a death's-hand, press upon my heart.

Provost Ramsay.—Hoot, I wad fain think that the warst is past, and that there is nae danger o' onything happenin now. But do ye ken, sir, it is my fixed and solemn opinion, that, before onything really is gaun to happen till a body, or to ony o' their friends like, there is a kind o' something comes owre ane, a sort o' sough about the heart there, an' ye dinna ken what for

Sir Alex.—Have ye beheld how they are raising bastions,

Flanking fresh cannon, too, in front the town,
Gaining new reinforcements to their camp,
And watching all our outgoings? Do you think
This looks as Edward meant to keep his faith?
I am betrayed, my friends—I am betrayed.
Fear marcheth quickly to a father's breast—
My sons are lost! are lost!

Provost Ramsay.—It's true that King Edward's preparations and his getting sic fearfu additions to his army, doesna look weel. But what is a king but his word, mair than a man!

Enter Servant.

Servant.—Lord Percy craves an audience with your honour.

Sir Alex.—Conduct him hither.—'Tis as I boded!
[*Exit* Servant—*enter* PERCY.
You look grave, my Lord.

Percy.—Faith, if I can look grave, to-day I should;
None of my mother's children, gossips said,
Were born with a sad face—but I could wish
That I had never smiled, or that her maid
Had been my mother, rather than that I
Had been the bearer of this day's vile tidings.

Sir Alex.—'Tis of my sons!—what! what of them, Lord Percy?
What of them?

Percy.—Yes, 'tis of your sons I'd speak!—
They live—they're well!—can you be calm to hear me?
I *would* speak of your sons—

Sir Alex.—I feel!—I feel!
I understand you, Percy! you WOULD speak of my sons!—
Go, thrust thy head into a lion's den,
Murder its whelps, and say to it—*Be calm!*—
Be calm! and feel a dagger in thy heart!
Twas kindly said!—kind! kind! to say, *Be calm!*
I'm calm, Lord Percy! what—what of my sons?

Percy.—If I can tell thee, and avoid being choked!—
Choked with my shame and loathing—I will tell thee;
But each particular word of this black mission
Is like a knife thrust in between my teeth.

Sir Alex.—Torture me not, my Lord—but speak the worst—
My ears can hear—my heart can hold no more!

Enter LADY SETON.

Percy.—Hear them in as few words as I can tell it—
Edward hath sworn, and he will keep his vow,
That, if to-day ye yield not up the town,
Become his prisoners, break your faith with Scotland,
Ye with the morning dawn shall see your sons
Hung up before your windows. He hath sworn it:
And, by my earldom—faith as a Christian—
Honour as a peer—he will perform it!

Lady Seton, [*aside*]—Ruler of earth and heaven! a mother begs
Thy counsel—thy protection! Say I, *mother!*
No voice again shall call me by that name—
Both! both my boys!

Sir Alex.—Ha! my Matilda!
Thou here! Dry up thy tears, my love! dry up thy tears!
I cannot sacrifice both sons and mother!
Alas, my country! I must sell thee dearly!
My faith—mine honour too!—take—take them, Percy!
I am a father, and my sons shall live!—
Shall *live!* and I shall *die!* [*Unsheathing his sword.*

Lady Seton.—Hold! hold, my husband—save thy life and honour!
Thou art a father—am not I a mother?
Knowest thou the measure of a mother's love?
Think ye she yearns not for her own heart's blood?
Yet I will *live!* and *thou shalt live,* my husband!
We will not rob this Edward of his shame
Write—I will dictate as my sons had done it—
I know their nature, for 'twas I who gave it.

Sir Alex.—Thou wait'st an answer, Percy—I will give it.
[*Sits down to write.*
No—I cannot, Matilda.

Lady Seton.—Write thus:—
"Edward may break his faith, but Seton cannot!
Edward may earn disgrace, but Seton honour!
His sons are in your power! Do!—do as ye list!"
[*He starts up in agitation.*

Sir Alex.—No, no! it cannot be—say not my sons!
Lord Percy, let your tyrant take my life!
Torture me inchmeal!—to the last I'll smile,
And bless him for his mercy!—but spare, oh, spare my children!

Provost Ramsay.—Really, Sir Alexander, I dinna ken hoo to advise ye. To think o' gien up the toun to sic a monster o' iniquity, is entirely out o' the question—just impossible a'thegither; and, to think o' the twa dear brave bairns sufferin', is just as impossible as to flee in the air. I tell ye what, my lord, and it is my opinion, it is a very fair proposal, (if naething but deaths will satisfy your King,) I, for ane, will die in their stead—their faither will for anither; and is there ane amang *you,* my townsmen, that winna do the same, and let your names be handed down as heroes to your bairns' bairns, and the last generation?

Percy.—Thou hast a noble heart, old honest Scotsman;
But I cannot accept your generous offer.

Lady Seton.—Mark this, my husband!—That *we* may still be parents—
That we might have two sons *to live and scorn us*—
Sell country—honour—all—and live disgraced:
Think ye MY sons would call a *traitor,* father—
They drew their life from *me*—from *me* they drew it—
And think ye I would call a *traitor, husband!*—
What? would ye have them live, that every slave,
In banquet or in battle, might exclaim—
"For you, ye hinds, your father sold his country!"
Or, would ye have them live, that no man's daughter
Would stoop so low as call your sons her husband!
Would ye behold them hooted, hissed at,
Oft, as they crossed the street, by every urchin!
Would ye your sons—your *noble* sons—met this,
Rather than die for Scotland! If ye do love them,
Love them as a *man!*

Sir Alex.—'Tis done! my country, thou hast made me bankrupt!
And I am childless! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII.—*The River, and Boat. Time, Midnight*
Enter one habited as a Friar.

Friar.—'Tis now thick midnight. All around me sleep,
And not a star looks from the curtained heaven.
The very sentinels cease to pace their round,
And stand in calm security. I'll brave them.
What though the bridge be guarded, and the river
Rush like a tiger?—love has no such fears,
And Heaven is stronger than its waters!
[*A bell tolls slowly.*
Ha! that slow-tongued bell, that speaks of death,
Falls on my ears as would a solid substance!
Pressing my heart down! Oh, cruel speed!
Already they prepare their execution!
But they shall live, or I with them shall die!
THOU, who beholdest me, and lookest through
The darkness of Thy heavens upon Thy suppliant,
Let not a tyrant stain Thy earth with blood—
The blood of innocence! Thou, who art mercy,
Spare a father's tears! Thou, who art love,
Look on a mother's anguish! Thou, who art justice,
Save! oh, save their children! Thou, who art power

Strengthen my hands to-night. [*Rises.*
Now may an angel's hand direct my skiff
Straight to their camp, till with one blow I strike
Their freedom and my country's!
[*He leaps into the boat and pushes off.*

SCENE IX.—*The English Camp. A fire in the distance.*

Enter HENRY *and* RICHARD, *fettered and guarded.*

Henry.—Would it were morning, and the hour were come,
For still my heart misgives me, lest our parents
Do, in fond weakness, save us by dishonour!
Richard.—Rather than purchase life at such a price,
And have my father sell his faith for me,
And sell his country, I would rather thou,
My brother in my birth and in my death,
Should be my executioner! We know them better!
Henry.—Now I seem old and weary of this life,
So joy I in our death for Scotland's sake,
For this death will so wed us to our country
We shall be old in years to all posterity!
And it will place a blot on Edward's name,
That time may blacken, but can ne'er efface!
Richard.—My heart, too, beats as light as if to-morrow
Had been by young love destined for my bridal;
Yet oft a tear comes stealing down my cheek,
When I do think me of our *mother*, Henry!
Henry.—Oh, speak not of our parents! or my heart
Will burst ere morning, and from the tyrant rob
His well-earned infamy.
Richard.—Oh! I must speak of them—
They now will wander weeping in their chamber,
Or from their window through the darkness gaze,
And stretch their hands and sigh towards the camp.
Then, when the red east breaks the night away—
Ah! what a sight will meet their eyes my brother!
Henry.—My brother!—oh, my brother!
Enter Friar.
Guard.—Who would pass here?
Friar.—A friend! a friend!—a messenger of mercy!
Guard.—Nay, wert thou mercy's self you cannot pass.
Friar.—Refuse ye then your prisoners their confessor?
Guard.—Approach not, or ye die!
Friar.—Would ye stretch forth your hand 'gainst Heaven's anointed?
Guard.—Ay! 'gainst the Pope himself, if he should thwart me.
Friar.—Mercy ye have not, neither shall ye find it.
[*Springs forward and stabs him.—Approaches* RICHARD *and* HENRY, *and unbinds their fetters.*
Friar.—In chains as criminals! Ye are free, but speak not.
Richard.—Here, holy Father, let me kneel to thank thee.
Henry.—And let me hear but my deliverer's name,
That my first prayer may waft it to the skies.
Lady Seton.—Kneel not, nor thank me here. There's need of neither—
But be ye silent, for the ground has ears,
Nor let it hear your footsteps.
[*She approaches the fire; kindles a torch and fires the camp.*
Henry.—Behold, my brother, he has fired the camp!
Already see the flames ascend around him.
Friar.—Now! now, my country! here thou art avenged!
Fly with me to the beach! pursuit is vain!—
Thou, Heaven, hast heard me! thou art merciful! [*Exit.*

SCENE X.—*Apartment in* SETON'S *House.*

Sir Alex.—Oh, what is honour to a father's heart?
Can it extinguish Nature—soothe his feelings—
Or make the small still voice of conscience dumb?
My sons! my sons!—Though ye should hold me guiltless, there's a tongue
Within me whispers, *I'm your murderer!*—
Ah! my Matilda! hadst thou been less noble,
We both had been less wretched! But do I,
To hide my sin, place't on the mother's heart!
Though she did hide the *mother* from *men's* eyes,
Now, crushed by woes, she cannot look on *mine.*
But, locked in secret, weeps her soul away,
That it may meet her children's! I alone,
Widowed and childless, like a blasted oak
Reft of its root and branches, must be left
For every storm to howl at! [ELLIOT *enters with a dagger*
Ah, my sons!
Could anguish rend my heartstrings, I should not
Behold another sun rise on my misery!
Elliot, [*springing upon him.*]—By heavens, mine enemy, I swear thou shalt not!
[*They struggle. Shouting without. Enter* Friar *and* Seton's Sons, PROVOST RAMSAY. Friar *springs forward.*
Friar.—Down! traitor, down! [*Stabs* ELLIOT.
Sir Alex.—My sons!—my sons!—
Angels of mercy, do you mock my sight!
My boys!—my boys!—
Provost Ramsay.—Save us a'! save us a'!—callants, come to my arms too! Here's an hour o' joy! This, in my solemn opinion, is what I ca' livin' a lifetime in the twinklin' o' an ee! And what think ye, Sir Alexander! The English camp is a' in a bleeze, and there are they fleeing awa helter-skelter, leaving everything behind them.
Sir Alex.—What!—they fly too!—thank Heaven! thank Heaven!
My cup of joy o'erflows, and floods my heart
More than my griefs!
Richard.—'Tis true, my father—
To this, our unknown saviour, do we owe
Our life and yours! 'twas he, too, seized the torch,
And bid the bonfire blaze to Scotland's freedom!
Sir Alex.—Forgive me, reverend stranger, if that I,
In the delirium of a parent's joy,
O'erlooked the hand that sav'd me—
Kneel, my sons,
And with thy father, at this stranger's feet,
Pour out our thanks, and beg his blessing also.
[*They kneel around the supposed* Friar, *who casts off the disguise, and is discovered to be their mother.*
Lady Seton.—A *mother,* in her children's cause, fears nothing,
And needs not *thanks*—
A *woman,* in her *country's cause,*
Can dare what man dare! [*They start up.*
Sir Alex.—What!—my Matilda!
Richard.—My mother!
Henry.—Ha! my mother!
Lady Seton.—Joy, joy, my sons—your mother's done her duty!
And joy, my husband, we have saved our *honour.*
Sir Alex.—Matilda, thou hast ta'en my heart anew,
And with it, too, my words!
Provost Ramsay.—The like o' this!—I may weel say what, in the universal globe, tempted me to be a bachelor!
[*Exeunt.*

Note.—In the foregoing Dramatic Tale, I have not followed the popular tradition that the sons of Seton were executed, as the story is improbable, and is not countenanced by contemporary history. A skull, however, to which tradition gives a marvellous history, and which is affirmed to be that of one of the Setons, has been for some years in possession of the writer.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

LOTTERY HALL.

I had slept on the preceding night at Brampton; and, without entering so far into particulars as to say whether I took the road towards Carlisle, Newcastle, Annan, or to the south, suffice it to say that, towards evening, and just as I was again beginning to think of a restingplace, I overtook a man sauntering along the road with his hands behind his back. A single glance informed me that he was not one who earned his bread by the sweat of his brow; but the same glance also told me that he had not bread enough and to spare. His back was covered with a well-worn black coat, the fashion of which belonged to a period at least twelve years preceding the time of which I write. The other parts of his outward man harmonized with his coat so far as apparent age and colour went. His head was covered with a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat; and on his nose he wore a pair of silver-mounted spectacles. To my mind he presented the picture of a poor scholar, or of gentility in ruins. The lappels of his coat were tinged a little, but only a little, with snuff—which *Flee-up*, or *Beggar's Brown*, as some call it, is very apt to do. In his hands, also, which, as I have said, were behind his back, he held his snuff-box. It is probable that he imagined he had returned it to his pocket after taking a pinch; but he appeared from his very saunter to be a meditative man, and an idea having shot across his brain while in the act of snuff-taking, the box was unconsciously retained in his hand and placed behind his back. Whether the hands are in the way of contemplation or not I cannot tell, for I never think, save when my hand holds a pen; yet I have observed that to carry the hands behind the back is a favourite position with *walking thinkers*. I accordingly set down the gentleman with the broad-brimmed hat and silver-mounted spectacles to be a walking thinker; and it is more than probable that I should not have broken in upon his musings, (for I am not in the habit of speaking to strangers,) had it not been that I observed the snuff-box in his hands, and that mine required replenishing at the time. It is amazing and humiliating to think how uncomfortable, fretful, and miserable the want of a pinch of snuff can make a man!—how dust longs for dust! I had been desiring a pinch for an hour, and here it was presented before me like an unexpected spring in the wilderness. Snuffers are like freemasons—there is a sort of brotherhood among them. The real snuffer will not give a pinch to the mere dipper into other people's boxes, but he will never refuse one to the initiated. Now, I took the measure of the man's mind at a single glance. I discovered something of the pedant in his very stride—it was thoughtful, measured, mathematical;—to say nothing of the spectacles—or of his beard, which was of a dark colour, and which had not been visited by the razor for at least two days. I therefore accosted him in the hackneyed but pompous language attributed to Johnson—

"Sir," said I, "permit me to emerge the summits of my digits in your pulveriferous utensil, in order to excite a grateful titillation in my olfactory nerves!"

"Cheerfully, sir," returned he, handing me the box, for which, by the way, he first groped in his waistcoat pocket. "I know what pleasure it is—'*nauribus aliquid haurire.*'"

I soon discovered that my companion, to whom a pinch of snuff had thus introduced me, was an agreeable and well-informed man. About a mile before us lay a village in which I intended to take up my quarters for the night, and near the village was a house of considerable dimensions, the appearance of which it would puzzle me to describe. The architect had evidently set all orders at defiance—it was a mixture of the castle and the cottage—a heap of stones confusedly put together. Around it was a quantity of trees, poplars and Scotch firs, and they appeared to have been planted as promiscuously as the house was built. Its appearance excited my curiosity, and I inquired of my companion what it was called, or to whom it belonged.

"Why, sir," said he, "people generally call it Lottery Hall, but the original proprietor intended that it should have been named Luck's Lodge. There is rather an interesting story connected with it, if you had time to hear it."

"If the story be as amusing as the appearance of the house," added I, "if you have time to tell it, I shall hear it."

I discovered that my friend with the silver-mounted spectacles kept what he termed an "Establishment for Young Gentlemen" in the neighbourhood, that being the modernised appellation for a boarding-school; though, judging from his appearance, I did not suppose his establishment to be overfilled; and having informed him that I intended to remain for the night at the village inn, I requested him to accompany me, where, after I had made obeisance to a supper, which was a duty that a walk of forty miles strongly prompted me to perform, I should, "enjoying mine ease" like the good old bishop, gladly hear his tale of Lottery Hall.

Therefore, having reached the inn, and partaken of supper and a glass together, after priming each nostril with a separate pinch from the box aforesaid, he thus began:—

Thirty years ago, there dwelt within the village a man named Andrew Donaldson. He was merely a day-labourer upon the estate of the Squire to whom the village belongs; but he was a singular man in many respects, and one whose character very few were able to comprehend. You will be surprised when I inform you that the desire to become a Man of Fashion, haunted this poor day-labourer like his shadow in the sun. It was the disease of his mind. Now, sir, before proceeding with my story, I shall make a few observations on this plaything and ruler of the world called Fashion. I would describe Fashion to be a deformed little monster with a chameleon skin, bestriding the shoulders of public opinion. Though weak in itself, it has gradually usurped a degree of power that is well nigh irresistible; and this tyranny prevails, in various forms, but with equal cruelty, over the whole habitable earth. Like a rushing stream, it

bears along all ranks and conditions of men, all avocations and professions, and often principles. Fashion is withal a notable courtier, bowing to the strong and flattering the powerful. Fashion is a mere whim, a conceit, a foible, a toy, a folly, and withal an idol whose worshippers are universal. Wherever introduced, it generally assumes the familiar name of Habit; and many of your great and philosophical men, and certain ill-natured old women, who appear at parties in their wedding-gowns, and despise the very name of Fashion, are each the slaves of sundry habits which once bore the appellation. Should Fashion miss the skirts of a man's coat, it is certain of seizing him by the beard. It is humiliating to the dignity of immortal beings, possessed of capabilities the extent of which is yet unknown, to confess that many of them, professing to be Christians, Jews, Mahomedans, or Pagans, are merely the followers in the stream of Fashion; and are Christians or Jews simply because such a religion was after the fashion of their fathers or country. During the present century, it has been the cause of much infidelity and freethinking, or rather, as is more frequently the case with its votaries, of *no thinking*. This arose from wisdom and learning being the fashion; and a vast number of brainless people—who could neither be out of the service of their idol, nor yet endure the plodding labour and severe study necessary for the acquiring of wisdom and learning, and many of them not even possessing the requisite abilities—in order to be thought at once wise men and philosophers, they pronounced religion to be a cheat, futurity a bugbear, and themselves organic clods. Fashion, indeed, is as capricious as it is tyrannical; with one man it plays the infidel, and with another it runs the gauntlet of bible and missionary meetings or benevolent societies. It is like the Emperor of Austria—a compound of intolerable evil and much good. It attempts to penetrate the mysteries of metaphysics, and it mocks the calculations of the most sagacious Chancellor of the Exchequer. At the nod of Fashion, ladies change their gloves, and the children of the glove-makers of Worcester go without dinners. At its call, they took the shining buckles from their shoes, and they walked in the laced boot the sandaled slipper, or the tied shoe. Individually it seemed a small matter whether shoes were fastened with a buckle or with ribbon; but the small-ware manufacturers found a new harvest, while the buckle-makers of Birmingham and their families, in thousands, were driven through the country to beg, to steal, to coin, to perish. This was the work of Fashion, and its effects are similar to the present hour. If the cloak drive the shawl from the promenade, Paisley and Bolton may go in sackcloth. Here I may observe that the cry of distress is frequently raised against *bad government*, assuming it to be the cause; when fickle Fashion has alone produced the injury. In such a matter, government was unable to prevent, and is unable to relieve—Fashion defying all its enactments, and the ladies being the sole governors in the case. For, although the world rules man and his business, and Fashion is the ruler of the world, yet the ladies, though the most devoted of its servants, are at the same time the rulers of Fashion. This last assertion may seem a contradiction, but is not the less true. With simplicity and the graces, Fashion has seldom exhibited any inclination to cultivate an acquaintance; now, the ladies being, in their very nature, form, and feature, the living representatives of these virtues, I am the more surprised that they should be the especial patrons of Fashion, seeing that its efforts are more directed to conceal a defect by making it more deformed, than to lend a charm to elegance or an adornment to beauty. The lady of fortune follows the tide of Fashion till she and her husband are within sight of the shores of poverty The portionless or the poorly portioned maiden presses on in its wake, till she find herself immured in the everlasting garret of an old maid. The well-dressed woman every man admires—the fashionable woman every man fears. Then comes the animal of the male kind, whose coat is cut, whose hair is curled, and his very cravat tied according to the fashion. Away with such shreds and patches of effeminacy! But the fashion for which Andrew Donaldson, the day-labourer, sighed, aimed at higher things than this. It grieved him that he was not a better dressed man and a greater man than the squire on whose estate he earned his daily bread. He was a hard and severe man in his own house—at his frown his wife was submissive and his children trembled. His family consisted of his wife three sons, Paul, Peter, and Jacob; and two daughters, Sarah and Rebecca. Though all scriptural names, they had all been so called after his own relations. His earnings did not exceed eight or nine shillings a-week; but even out of this sum he did not permit the one half to go to the support of his family—and that half was doled out most reluctantly, penny by penny. For twenty years, he had never entrusted his wife with the management or the keeping of a single sixpence. With her, of a verity, money was but a *sight*, and that generally in the smallest coins of the realm. She seldom had an opportunity of contemplating the gracious countenance of his Majesty; and when she had, it was invariably upon copper. If she needed but a penny to complete the cooking of a dinner, the children had to run for it to the fields, the quarry, or the hedge-side, where their father might be at work; and then it was given with a lecture against their mother's extravagance! Extravagance indeed! to support seven mouths for a week out of five shillings! I have spoken of dinners, and I should tell you that bread was seen in the house but once a-day, and that only of the coarsest kind. Potatoes were the staple commodity, and necessity taught Mrs Donaldson to cook them in twenty different ways; and, although butcher meat was never seen beneath Andrew's roof, with the exception of pork of their own feeding, in a very small portion, once a week, yet the kindness of the cook in the Squire's family, who occasionally presented her with a jar of *kitchen-fee*, enabled her to dish up her potatoes in modes as various and palatable to the hungry, as they were creditable to her own ingenuity and frugality. Andrew was a man of no expensive habits himself; he had never been known to spend a penny upon liquor of any kind, but once, and that was at the christening of his youngest child, who was baptised in the house; when, it being a cold and stormy night, and the minister having far to ride, and withal being labouring under a cold, he said he would thank Andrew for a glass of spirits. The frugal father thought the last born of his flock had made an expensive entry into existence; but handing twopence to his son Paul, he desired him to bring a glass of spirits to his reverence. The spirits were brought in a milk-pot; but a milk-pot was an unsightly and an unseemly vessel out of which to ask a minister to drink. The only piece of crystal in the house was a footless wine-glass, out of which a grey linnet drank, and there was no alternative but to take it from the cage, clean it, pour the spirits into it, and hand it, bottomless as it was, to the clergyman—and this was done accordingly. For twenty years, this was all that Andrew Donaldson was known to have spent on ale, wine, or spirits; and as, from the period that his children had been able to work, he had not contributed a single sixpence of his earnings towards the maintenance of his house, it was generally believed that he could not be worth less than two or three hundred pounds. Where he kept his money, however, or who was his banker, no one could tell. Some believed that he was saving in order to emigrate to Canada and purchase land; but this was only a surmise. For weeks and months he was frequently wont to manifest the deepest anxiety. His impatience was piteous to behold; but why he was anxious and impatient no one could tell. These fits of anxiety were as frequently succeeded by others of the deepest despondency; and during both, his wife and children feared to

look in his face to speak or move in his presence. As his despondency was wont to wear away, his penuriousness in the same degree increased; and at such periods a penny for the most necessary purpose was obstinately refused.

Such were the life and habits of Andrew Donaldson, until his son Paul, who was the eldest of his family, had attained the age of three and twenty, and his daughter Rebecca, the youngest, was seventeen, when, on a Saturday evening, he returned from the market-town, so changed, so elated, (though evidently not with strong drink,) so kind, so happy, and withal so proud, that his wife and his sons and daughters marvelled, and looked at each other with wonder. He walked backward and forward across the floor with his arms crossed upon his breast, his head thrown back, and he stalked with the majestic stride of a stage-king in a tragedy. He took the fragment of a mirror, which, being fastened in pieces of parchment, hung against the wall, and endeavoured, as he best might, and as its size and its half triangular, half circular form would admit, to survey himself from head to foot. His family gazed at him and at each other with increased astonishment.

"The man's possessed!" whispered Mrs Donaldson, in terror.

He thrust his hand into his pocket, he drew out a quantity of silver.

"Go, *Miss* Rebecca," said he, "and order John Bell of the King's Head to send Mister Donaldson a bottle of brandy and a bottle of his best wine, instantly."

His wife gave a sort of scream, his children started to their feet.

"Go!" said he, stamping his foot, and placing the money in her hand—"go! I order you."

They knew his temper, that he was not to be thwarted, and Rebecca obeyed. He continued to walk across the floor with the same stride of importance; he addressed his sons as Master Donaldson, Master Peter, and Master Jacob; and Sarah, who was the best of the family, as Miss Donaldson. He walked up to his wife, and, with a degree of kindness, such as his family had never witnessed before, he clapped her on the shoulder, and said—

"Catherine, you know the proverb, that 'they who look for a silk gown always get a sleeve o't'—I have long looked for one to you, and now

'I'll mak ye lady o' them a'!'"

And, in his own unmusical way, he sang a line or two from the "*Lass o' Gowrie.*"

Poor Mrs Donaldson trembled from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot. Her looks plainly told that she feared her husband had "gone beside himself." He resumed his march across the floor, stately as an admiral on the quarter-deck, when Rebecca entered with the brandy and the wine.

"What!" said he, again stamping his foot, "did I not *order* you to *order* John Bell to *send* the bottles?"

Rebecca shook—but he took them from her hand, and ordered her to bring the glasses! I have already noticed the paucity of glass vessels at Rebecca's baptism. They were not more numerous now; and even the footless glass, out of which the linnet drank, had long ago, with the linnet, gone the way of all flesh and of all glass; and Rebecca placed a white teacup, scored and seamed with age, (there were but four in the house,) upon the table.

"What! a cup! a cup!" exclaimed he, stamping his foot more vehemently than before—"did I not *order* you to bring *glasses!* Me!—me!—Mister Donaldson drink wine out of a teacup!" And he dashed the cup behind the fire.

"O Paul! Paul!" cried Mrs Donaldson, addressing her first-born, "is yer faither crazed!—will ye no haud him!—shall we send for the doctor, a strait-jacket, or the minister?"

Paul was puzzled: his father did not exactly seem mad; but his conduct, his extravagance, was so unlike anything he had ever seen in him before, that he was troubled on his account, and he rose to reason with him.

"Keep your seat, Master Donaldson," said his father, with the dignity of a duke—"Keep your seat, sir; your father is not mad, but before a week go round, the best hat in the village shall be lifted to him."

Paul knew not what to think; but he had been taught to fear and to obey his father, and he obeyed him now. Andrew again handed money to his daughter, and ordered her to go and purchase six tumblers and six wine glasses. Mrs Donaldson wrung her hands; she no longer doubted that her husband was "beside himself." The crystal, however, was brought, the wine and the brandy were sent round, and the day-labourer made merry with his children.

On the Monday following, he went not out into the fields to his work as usual; but arraying himself in his Sunday attire, he took leave of his family, saying he would be absent for a week. This was as unaccountable as his sending for the wine, the brandy, and the crystal, for no man attended his employment more faithfully than Andrew Donaldson. For twenty years he had never been absent from his work a single day, Sundays and Fast-days alone excepted. His children communed together, and his wife shed tears; she was certain that something had gone wrong about his head; yet, strange as his actions were, his conversation was rational; and though still imperious, he manifested more affection for them all than he had ever done before. They did not dare to question him as to the change that had come over him, or whether he was going; for at all times his mildest answer to all inquiries was, that "fools and bairns should never see things half done." He departed, therefore, without telling why or whither, simply intimating that he would return within seven days, leaving his family in distress and bewilderment.

Sunday came, but no tidings were heard regarding him. With much heaviness of heart and anxiety of spirit, his sons and daughters proceeded to the church; and while they, with others, yet stood in groups around the churchyard, a stranger gentleman entered. His step was slow and soldier-like. He carried a silken umbrella to screen himself from the sun, for they were then but little used as a protection from rain; few had at that time discovered that they could be so applied. His head was covered with a hat of the most fashionable shape. His hair was thickly powdered, and gathered up behind in a *queue*. His coat, his vest, his breeches, were of silken velvet, and the colour thereof was the kingly purple—moreover, the knees of the last mentioned article were fastened with silver buckles, which shone as stars as the sun fell upon them. His stockings also were of silk, white as the driven snow; and, partly covering these, he wore a pair of boots of the kind called Hessian. In his left hand, as I have said, he carried an umbrella, and in his right he bore a silver-mounted cane.* The people gazed with wonder as the stranger paced slowly along the footpath; and, as he approached the door, the sexton lifted his hat, bowed, and walking before him, conducted him to the Squire's pew. The gentleman sat down; he placed his umbrella between his knees, his cane by his side, and from his pocket he drew out a silver snuff-box, and a Bible in two volumes, bound in crimson-coloured morocco. As the congregation began to assemble, some looked at the stranger in the Squire's seat with wonder. All thought his face was familiar to them. On the countenances of some there was a smile; and from divers parts of the church, there issued sounds like the tittering of suppressed laughter. Amongst those who gazed on him were the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson. Their cheeks alternately became red, pale, hot, and cold. Their eyes were in a dream, and poor Sarah's head fell, as though she had

* To some this picture may appear exaggerated, but many readers of these Tales will recognise in it a faithful portraiture of the original.

ainted away, upon the shoulder of her brother Paul. Peter looked at Jacob, and Rebecca hung her head. But the Squire and his family entered. They reached the pew—he bowed to the stranger—gazed—started—frowned—ushered his family rudely past him, and beckoned for the gentleman to leave the pew. In the purple-robed stranger he recognised his own field labourer, Andrew Donaldson! Andrew, however, kept his seat, and looked haughty and unmoved. But the service began—the preacher looked often to the pew of the Squire, and at length he too seemed to make the discovery, for he paused for a full half minute in the middle of his sermon, gazed at the purple coat, and all the congregation gazed with him, and breaking from his subject, he commenced a lecture against the wickedness of pride and vanity.

The service being concluded, the sons and daughters of Andrew Donaldson proceeded home with as many eyes fixed upon them as upon their father's purple coat. They were confounded and unhappy beyond the power of words to picture their feelings. They communicated to their mother all that they had seen. She, good soul, was more distressed than even they were, and she sat down and wept for "her poor Andrew." He came not; and Paul, Peter, and Jacob were about to go in quest of him—and they now thought in earnest of a strait-waistcoat,—when John Bell's waiter of the King's Head entered, and, presenting Mr Donaldson's compliments, requested them to come and dine with him. Wife, sons, and daughters were petrified!

"Puir man!" said Mrs Donaldson, and tears forbade her to say more.

"Oh! my faither! my puir faither!" cried Sarah.

"He does not seem to be poor," answered the waiter.

"What in the world can hae put him sae?" said Jacob.

"We maun try to soothe and humour him," added Paul.

The whole family, therefore, though ashamed to be seen in the village, went to the King's Head together. They were ushered into a room in the midst of which stood Andrew, with divers trunks or boxes around him. His wife screamed as she beheld his transformation; and, clasping her hands together, she cried—"O Andrew!"

"Catherine," said he, "ye must understand that ye are a lady now, and ye must not call me Andrew, but Mister Donaldson."

"A leddy!" exclaimed she, in a tone of mingled fear and astonishment—"O dear! what does the man mean! Bairns! bairns! can nane o' ye bring yer faither to reason!"

"It is you that requires to be brought to reason, Mrs Donaldson," said he; "but now since I see that ye are all upon the rack, I'll put ye at your wits' end. I am sensible that baith you and our neighbours have always considered me in the light of a miser. But neither you nor them knew my motive for saving. It has ever been my desire to become the richest, the greatest, and the most respectable man in the parish. But, though you may think that I have pinched the stomach and wasted nothing on the back, this I knew I never could become out of the savings of nine shillings a week. Yet, night and day, I hoped, prayed, and believed, that it would be accomplished—and it is accomplished!—yes, I repeat, it is accomplished."

"Oh, help us!—help us!—what's to be dune wi' him?" cried Mrs Donaldson.

"Will ye speak sae that we can understand ye, faither?" said Paul.

"Well, then," replied Andrew, "for twenty years have I purchased shares in the lotteries, and twenty times did I get nothing but blanks—but I have got it at last!—I have got it at last!"

"What have you got, Andrew?" inquired Mrs Donaldson, eagerly, whose eyes were beginning to be opened.

"What have ye got, faither?" exclaimed Rebecca, breathlessly, who possessed no small portion of her father's pride; "how meikle is't?—will we can keep a coach?"

"Ay, and a coachman, too!" answered he, with an air of triumphant pride; "I have got the half of a *thirty thousand!*"

"The like o' that!" said Mrs Donalsdon, raising her hands.

"A coach!" repeated Rebecca, surveying her face in a mirror

Sarah looked surprised, but said nothing.

"Fifteen thousand pounds!" said Peter.

"Fifteen thousand!" responded Jacob.

Paul was thoughtful.

"Now," added Andrew, opening the boxes around him, "go each of you cast off the sackcloth which now covers you, and in these you will find garments such as it becomes the family of Andrew Donaldson, Esquire, to wear."

They obeyed his commands; and, casting aside their home made cloth and cotton gowns, they appeared before him in the raiment which he had provided for them. The gowns were of silk, the coats of the finest Saxony, the waistcoats Marseilles. Mrs Donaldson's dress sat upon her awkwardly—the waist was out of its place, she seemed at a loss what to do with her arms, and altogether she appeared to feel as though the gown were too fine to sit upon. Sarah was neat, though not neater than she was in the dress of printed cotton which she had cast off; but Rebecca was transformed into the fine lady in a moment, and she tossed her head with the air of a duchess. The sleeves of Paul's coat were too short, Peter's vest would admit of but one button, and Jacob's trousers were deficient in length. Nevertheless great was the outward change upon the family of Andrew Donaldson, and they gazed upon each other in wonder, as they would have stared at an exhibition of strange animals.

At this period there was a property, consisting of about twenty acres, in the neighbourhood of the village, for sale. Mr Donaldson became the purchaser, and immediately commenced to build *Luck's Lodge, or Lottery Hall,* which to-day arrested your attention. As you may have seen, it was built under the direction of no architect but caprice, or a fickle and uninformed taste. The house was furnished expensively; there were card-tables and dining-tables, the couch, the sofa, and the harpsichord. Mrs Donaldson was afraid to touch the furniture, and she thought it little short of sin to sit upon the hair-bottomed mahogany chairs, which were studded with brass nails, bright as the stars in the firmament. Though, however, a harpsichord stood in the dining-room, as yet no music had issued from the Lodge. Sarah had looked at it, and Rebecca had touched it, and appeared delighted with the sounds she produced; but even her mother knew that such sounds were not a tune. A dancing-master, therefore, who at that period was teaching the "five positions" to the youths and maidens of the village, was engaged to teach dancing and the mysteries of the harpsichord at the same time to the daughters of Mr Donaldson. He had become a great and a rich man in a day; yet the pride of his heart was not satisfied. His neighbours did not lift their hats to him as he had expected; but they passed him saying—"Here's a fine day, Andrew!"—or, "Weel Andrew, hoo's a' wi' ye the day?" To such observations or inquiries he never returned an answer; but with his silver-mounted cane in his hand stalked proudly on. But this was not all; for, even in passing through the village, he would hear the women remark—"There's that silly body Donaldson away past"—or, "There struts the Lottery Ticket!" These things were wormwood to his spirit, and he repented that he had built his house in a neighbourhood where he was known. To be equal with the Squire, however, and to mortify his neighbours the more, he bought a pair of horses and a barouche. He was long puzzled for a crest and motto with which to emblazon it, and Mrs Donaldson suggested that Peter should paint on it a lottery ticket, but her husband stamped his foot in anger; and at length the coach painter furnished it with the head and paws of some unknown animal.

Paul had always been given to books; he now requested to be sent to the University. His wish was complied with, and he took his departure for Edinburgh. Peter had always evinced a talent for drawing and painting. When a boy, he was wont to sketch houses and trees with pieces of chalk, which his mother declared to be as *natural as life*, and he now took instructions from a drawing-master. Jacob was ever of an idle turn; and he at first prevailed upon his father to purchase him a riding-horse, and afterwards to furnish him with the means of seeing the world. So Jacob set up gentleman in earnest, and went abroad. Mrs Donaldson was at home in no part of the house but the kitchen; and in it, notwithstanding her husband's lectures to remember that she was the wife of Mister Donaldson, she was generally found.

At the period when her father obtained the prize, Sarah was on the eve of being united to a respectable young man, a mechanic in the village; but now she was forbidden to speak to or look on him. The cotton gown lay lighter on her bosom than did its silken successor. Rebecca mocked her, and her father persecuted her; but poor Sarah could not cast off the affections of her heart like a worn garment. From childhood, she had been blithe as the lark, but now dull melancholy claimed her as its own. The smile and the rose expired upon her cheeks together, and her health and happiness were crushed beneath her father's wealth. Rebecca, too, in their poverty had been "respected like the lave;" but she now turned disdainfully from her admirer, and when he dared to accost her, she inquired with a frown—"Who are you, sir?" In her efforts also to speak properly, she committed foul murder on his Majesty's English; but she became the pride of her father's heart, his favourite daughter whom he delighted to honour.

Still feeling bitterly the want of reverence which was shewn him by the villagers, and resolved at the same time to act as other gentlemen of fortune did, as winter drew on, Mr Donaldson removed, with his wife and daughters, and his son Peter, to London. They took up their abode at a hotel in Albemarle Street; and having brought the barouche with them, every afternoon Mr Donaldson, and his daughter Rebecca, drove round the Park. His dress was rich and his carriage proud, and he lounged about the most fashionable places of resort; but he was not yet initiated into the mysteries of fashion and greatness; he was ignorant of the key by which their chambers were to be unlocked; and at mortified and surprised him that Andrew Donaldson, Esq. of Luck's Lodge—a gentleman who paid ready money for everything—received no invitations to the routes, the assemblies, or tables of the *haut ton;* but he paraded Bond Street, or sauntered on the Mall, with as little respect shewn to him as by his neighbours in the country. When he had been a month in the metropolis, he discovered that he had made an omission, and he paid two guineas for the announcement of his arrival in a morning newspaper. "This will do!" said he, twenty times during breakfast, as he held the paper in his hand, and twenty times read the announcement —"Arrived at ——— Hotel, Albemarle Street, A. Donaldson, Esq., of Luck's Lodge, and family, from their seat in the north." But this did not do; he found it was two guineas thrown away, but consoled himself with the thought that it would vex the Squire and the people of his native village. With the hope of becoming familiar with the leading men of the great world, he became a frequenter of the principal coffee-rooms. At one of these, he shortly became acquainted with a Captain Edwards, who, as Mr Donaldson affirmed, was intimate with all the world, and bowed to and was known by every nobleman they met. Edwards was one of those creatures who live—Heaven knows how—who are without estates and without fortune, but who appear in the resorts of Fashion as its very mirrors. In a word, he was one of the hangers-on of the nobility and gentry—one of their blacklegs and purveyors. Poor Mr Donaldson thought him the greatest man he had ever met with. He heard him accost noblemen on the streets in the *afternoon* with—"Good *morning*, my lord," and they familiarly replied—"Ha! Tom! what's the news?" He had borrowed ten, fifty, and a hundred pounds from his companion; and he had relieved him of a hundred or two more in teaching him to play at whist; but vain, simple Mr Donaldson never conceived that such a great man and such a fashionable man could be without money, though he could not be at the trouble to carry it. Edwards was between thirty and forty years of age, but looked younger; his hair was black, and tortured into ringlets; his upper lip was ornamented with thin, curved mustachioes; and in his dress he was an exquisite, or a buck as they were then called, of the first water. Mr Donaldson invited him to his hotel, where he became a daily visiter. He spoke of his uncle the Bishop of such a place, and of his godfather the Earl of another—of his estates in Wales, and the rich advowsons in his gift. Andrew gloried in his fortune; he was now reaching the *acme* of his ambition; he believed there would be no difficulty in getting his friend to bestow one or more of the benefices, when vacant, upon his son Paul; and he thought of sending for Paul to leave Edinburgh, and enter himself of Cambridge. Rebecca displayed all her charms before the Captain; and the Captain all his attractions before her. She triumphed in a conquest; so did he. Mr Donaldson now also began to give dinners—and to them Captain Edwards invited the Honourable This, and Sir That; but in the midst of his own feast he found himself a cipher, where he was neither looked upon nor regarded, but had to think himself honoured in Honourables eating of the banquet for which he had to pay. This galled him nearly as much as the perverseness of his neighbours in the country in not lifting their hats to him; but he feared to notice it, lest by so doing he should lose the distinction of their society. From the manner in which his guests treated him, they gave him few opportunities of betraying his origin; but, indeed, though a vain, he was not an ignorant man.

While these doings were carrying on in Albemarle Street, Mrs Donaldson was, as she herself expressed it, "uneasy as a fish taken from the water." She said "such ongoings would be her death;" and she almost wished that the lottery ticket had turned up a blank. Peter was studying the paintings in Somerset House, and taking lessons in oil-colours; Rebecca mingled with the company, or flaunted with Captain Edwards; but poor Sarah drooped like a lily that appears before its time, and is bitten by the returning frost. She wasted away—she died of a withered heart.

For a few weeks her death stemmed the tide of fashionable folly and extravagance; for, although vanity was the ruling passion of Andrew Donaldson, it could not altogether extinguish the parent in his heart. But his wife was inconsolable; for Sarah had been her favourite daughter, as Rebecca was his. It is a weak and a wicked thing, sir, for parents to make favourites of one child more than another—good never comes of it. Peter painted a portrait of his deceased sister from memory, and sent it to the young man to whom she was betrothed—I say betrothed, for she had said to him "*I will,*" and they had broken a ring between them; each took a half of it; and, poor thing, her part of it was found on her breast in a small bag, when she died. The Captain paid his daily visits—he condoled with Rebecca—and, in a short time, she began to say it was a silly thing for her sister to die; but she was a grovelling-minded girl, she had no spirit.

Soon after this, Captain Edwards, in order to cheer Mr Donaldson, obtained for him admission to a club, where he introduced him to a needy peer, who was a sort of half proprietor of a nomination borough, and had the sale of the representation of a thousand souls. It was called his lordship's borough. One of its seats was then vacant, and was in the

market; and his lordship was in want of money. Captain Edwards whispered the matter to his friend Mr Donaldson. Now, the latter, though a vain man, and anxious to be thought a fashionable man was also a shrewd and a calculating man. His ideas expanded—his ambition fired at the thought! He imagined he saw the words ANDREW DONALDSON, ESQ. M.P. in capitals before him. He discovered that he had always had a turn for politics—he remembered that, when a working-man, he had always been too much in an argument for the *Black-nebs*. He thought of the flaming speeches he would make in parliament—he had a habit of stamping his foot, (for he thought it dignified,) and he did so, and half exclaimed—"Mr Speaker!" But he thought also of his family—he sank the idea of advowsons, and he had no doubt but he might push his son Paul forward till he saw him Prime Minister or Lord Chancellor; Peter's genius, he thought, was such as to secure his appointment to the Board of Works whenever he might apply for it; Jacob would make a Secretary to a foreign ambassador; and for Rebecca be provided as a maid of honour. But, beyond all this, he perceived also that, by writing the letters M.P. after his name, he would be a greater man than the Squire of his native village, and its inhabitants would then lift their hats to him when he went down to his seat; or, if they did not, he would know how to punish them. He would bring in severer bills on the game laws and against smuggling—he would chastise them with a new turnpike act!

Such were the ideas that passed rapidly through his mind when his friend Edwards suggested the possibility of his becoming a member of parliament.

"And how much do ye think it would cost to obtain the seat?" inquired he, anxiously.

"Oh, only a few thousands," replied the Captain.

"How many, think ye?" inquired Mr Donaldson.

"Can't say exactly," replied the other; "but my friend Mr Borrowbridge, the solicitor in Clement's Inn, has the management of the affair—we shall inquire at him."

So they went to the solicitor; the price agreed upon for the representation of the borough was five thousand pounds; and the money was paid.

Mr Donaldson returned to his hotel, his heart swelling within him, and cutting the figures M.P. in the air with his cane as he went along. A letter was dispatched to Paul at Edinburgh to write a speech for his father, which he might deliver on the day of his nomination.

"O father!" exclaimed Paul, as he read the letter, "much money hath made thee mad!"

The speech was written and forwarded, though reluctantry by return of post. It was short, sententious, patriotic.

With the speech in his pocket, Mr Donaldson, accompanied by his friend Edwards, posted down to the borough. But, to their horror, on arriving, they found that a candidate of the opposite party had dared to contest the borough with the nobleman's nominee, and had commenced his canvass the day before. But what was worse than all, they were told that he bled freely, and his friends were distributing *gooseberries* right and left.

"What is the meaning of all this?" said Mr Donaldson—"have I not paid for the borough, and is it not mine? I shall punish him for daring to poach upon my grounds."

And, breaking away from Captain Edwards and his friends, he hurried out in quest of the Mayor, to request advice from him. Nor had he gone far, till, addressing a person who was employed in thatching a house—

"Hollo, friend!" cried he, "can you inform me where I shall find the right worshipful the Mayor?"

"Whoy, Zur!" replied the thatcher, "I be's the Mayor!"*

Andrew looked at him. "Heaven help us!" thought he—'you the Mayor!—you!—a thatcher!—well may I be a member of parliament!" But, without again addressing his worship, he hastened back to his friends; and with them he was made sensible, that, although he had given a consideration for the borough, yet, as opposition had started—as the power of the patron was not omnipotent—as the other candidate was bleeding freely—as he was keeping open houses and giving *yellow gooseberries*—there was nothing for it but that Mr Donaldson should do the same.

"But, oh! how much will it require?" again inquired the candidate, in a tone of anxiety.

"Oh, merely a thousand or two!" again coolly rejoine Captain Edwards.

"A thousand or two!" ejaculated Mr Donaldson, for his thousands were becoming few. But, like King Richard, he had "set his fate upon a cast," and he "would stand the hazard of the die." As to his landed qualification, if elected, the patron was to provide for that; and, after a few words from his friend Edwards, "Richard was himself again"—his fears vanished—the ocean of his ambition opened before him—he saw golden prospects for himself and for his family—he could soon, when elected, redeem a few thousands; and he bled, he opened houses, he gave gooseberries as his opponent did.

But the great, the eventful, the nomination day arrived Mr Donaldson—Andrew Donaldson, the labourer, that was—stood forward to make his speech—the speech that his son Paul, student in the University of Edinburgh, had written. He got through the first sentence, in the tone and after the manner of the village clergyman, whom he had attended for forty years; but there he stuck fast; and of all his son Paul had written—short, sententious, patriotic as it was—he remembered not a single word. But, though gravelled from forgetfulness of his son's matter, and though he stammered, hesitated, and tried to recollect himself for a few moments, yet he had too high an idea of his own consequence to stand completely still. No man who has a consequential idea of his own abilities will ever positively stick in a speech. I remember an old schoolmaster of mine used to say, that a public speaker should regard his audience as so many cabbage-stocks.* But he had never been a public speaker, or he would have said no such thing. Such an advice may do very well for a precentor to a congregation; but, as regards an orator addressing a multitude, it is a different matter. No, sir; the man who speaks in public must neither forget his audience nor overlook them; he must regard them as his *equals*, but none of them as his *superiors* in intellect; he should regard every man of them as capable of understanding and appreciating what he may say; and, in order to make himself understood, he should endeavour to bring his language and his imagery down to every capacity, rather than permit them to go on stilts or to take wings. Some silly people imagine that what they call fine language, flowery sentences, and splendid metaphors, are oratory. Stuff!—stuff! Where do you find them in the orations of the immortal orators of Greece or Rome? They used the proper language—they used effective language—

"Thoughts that breathed and words that burned;"

but they knew that the key of eloquence must be applied not to the head but to the heart. But, sir, I digress from the speech of Mr Donaldson. (Pardon me—I am in the habit of illustrating to my boys, and dissertation is my fault, or rather I should say my habit.) Well, sir, as I have said, he stuck fast in the speech which his son had written; but, as I have also said, he had too high an opinion of himself to stand long without saying something. When left to himself, in what he did say, I am afraid he "betrayed his birth and breeding;" for there was loud laughter in the hall, and cries of *hear him! hear him!* But the poll commenced; the

* This picture also is drawn from life.

* This, I believe, was the advice to his students of a late Professor in the University of Edinburgh.

other candidate brought voters from five hundred miles distance—from east, west, north, and south; from Scotland, Ireland, and the Continent. He polled a vote at every three proclamations, when Mr Donaldson had no more to bring forward; and on the fourteenth day he defeated him by a majority of ONE! The right worshipful thatcher declared that the election had fallen on the opposing candidate. The people also said that he had spent most money, and that it was right the election should fall on the best man. He in truth had spent more in the contest than Andrew Donaldson had won by his lottery ticket. The feelings of Mr Donaldson on the loss of his election were the agonies of extreme despair. In the height of his misery, he mentioned to his *introducer*, Captain Edwards, or rather I should call him his *traducer*, that he was a ruined man—that he had lost his all! The Captain laughed and left the room. He seemed to have left the town also; for his victim did not meet with him again.

In a state bordering on frenzy, he returned to London. He reached the hotel—he rushed into the room where his wife, his son, and his daughter sat. With a confused and hurried step he paced to and fro across the floor, wringing his hands, and ever and anon exclaiming bitterly—

"Lost Andrew Donaldson!—Ruined Andrew Donaldson!"

His son Peter, who took the matter calmly, and who believed that the extent of the loss was the loss of the election, carefully surveyed his father's attitudes and the expression of his countenance, and thought the scene before him would make an admirable subject for a picture—the piece to be entitled "*The Unsuccessful Candidate.*" "It will help to make good his loss," thought Peter, "provided he will sit."

"O dearsake, Andrew! Andrew! what is't?" cried Mrs Donaldson.

"Lost! lost! ruined Andrew Donaldson!" replied her husband.

"Oh, where is the Captain?—where is Edwards?—why is not he here?" asked Rebecca.

"The foul fiend!" exclaimed her father.

"O Andrew, man! speak, Andrew, jewel!—what is't?" added his wife; "if it be only the loss o' siller, Heaven be praised; for I've neither had peace nor comfort since ye got it.'

"*Only* the loss!" cried he, turning upon her like a fury—"only the loss!" Agony and passion stopped his utterance.

Mr Donaldson was, in truth, a ruined man. Of the fifteen thousand which he had obtained, not three hundred, exclusive of Lottery Hall and the twenty acres around it, were left. His career had been a brief and a fashionable one. On the following day, his son Jacob returned from abroad. Within twelve months, he had cost his father a thousand pounds; and, in exchange for the money spent, he brought home with him all the vices he had met with on his route. But I blame not Jacob—his betters, the learned and the noble, do the same. Poor fellow! he was sent upon the world with a rough garment round his shoulders, which gathered up all the dust that blew, and retained a portion of all the filth with which it came in contact; but polished substances would not adhere to it.

Captain Edwards returned no more to the hotel. He had given the last lesson to his scholar in the science of fashion—he had extorted from him the last fee he could spare. He had gauged the neck of his purse, and he forsook him—in his debt he forsook him! Poor Rebecca! day after day, she inquired after the Captain! the Captain! Lost—degraded—wretched Rebecca! But I will say no more of her; she became as dead while she yet lived—the confiding victim of a villain.

The barouche, the horses, the trinkets that deformed Mrs Donaldson, with a piano that had been bought for Rebecca, were sold, and Andrew Donaldson with his family left London and proceeded to Lottery Hall. But there, though he endeavoured to carry his head high, though he still walked with his silver cane, and though it was known (and he took care to make it known) that he had polled within one of being a member of parliament—still the Squire did not acknowledge him—his old acquaintances did not lift their hats to him—but all seemed certain that he was coming down "*by the run*," (I think that was the slang or provincial phrase they used,) to his old level. They perceived that he kept no horses now—save one to work the twenty acres around the lodge; for he had ploughed up and sown with barley, and let out as potato ground, what he at first had laid out as a park: This spoke volumes. They also saw that he had parted with his coach, that he kept but one servant, and that servant told tales in the village. He was laughed at by his neighbours, and those who had been his fellow-labourers; and with a Sardonic chuckle, they were wont to speak of his house as "*the Member o' Parliament's.*' I have said that I would say no more of poor Rebecca; but the tongues of the women in the village dwelt also on her. But she died, and in the same hour died also a new-born child of the villain Edwards.

Peter had left his father's house and commenced the profession of an artist, in a town about twenty miles from this. Mr Donaldson was now humbled. It was his intention, with the sorry remnant of his fortune, to take a farm for Jacob; but, oh! Jacob had bathed in a sea of vice, and the bitter waters of adversity could not wash out the pollution it had left behind it. Into his native village he carried the habits he had acquired or witnessed beneath the cerulean skies of Italy, or amidst the dark-eyed daughters of France. Shame followed his footsteps. Yea, although the Squire despised Mr Donaldson, his son, a youth of nineteen, became the boon companion of Jacob. They held midnight orgies together. Jacob initiated the Squireling into the mysteries of Paris and Rome, of Naples and Munich, whence he was about to proceed. But I will not dwell upon their short career. Extravagance attended it, shame and tears followed it.

Andrew Donaldson no longer possessed the means of upholding his son in folly and wickedness. He urged him to settle in the world—to take a farm while he had the power left of placing him in it; but Jacob's sins pursued him. He fled from his father's house, and enlisted in a marching regiment about to embark for the East Indies. No more was heard of him for many years, until a letter arrived from one of his comrades announcing that he had fallen at Corunna.

To defray the expenses which his son Jacob had brought upon him, Mr Donaldson had not only to part with the small remnant that was left him of his fifteen thousand, but to take a heavy mortgage upon Lottery Hall. Again he was compelled to put his hand to the spade and to the plough; and his wife, deprived of her daughters, again became her own servant. Sorrow, shame, and disappointment gnawed in his heart. His garments of pride, now wore threadbare, were cut off for ever. The persecution, the mockery of his neighbours increased. They asked each other "if they had seen the Member o' Parliament wi' the spade in his hand again?" They quoted the text, "A haughty spirit goes before a fall;" and they remembered passages of the preacher's lecture against pride and vanity on the day when Andrew appeared in his purple coat. He became a solitary man; and, on the face of this globe which we inhabit, there existed not a more miserable being than Andrew Donaldson.

Peter was generally admitted to be a young man of great talents, and bade fair to rise to eminence in his profession as an artist. There was to be an exhibition of the works of living artists in Edinburgh; and Peter went through to it, taking with him more than a dozen pictures, on all subjects and of all sizes. He had landscapes, sea pieces, historical

paintings, portraits, fish, game, and compositions, the grouping of which would have done credit to a master. In size, they were from five feet square to five inches. His brother Paul, who was still at the college, and who now supported himself by private teaching, was surprised when one morning Peter arrived at his lodgings, with three cadies at his back, bearing his load of pictures. Paul welcomed him with open arms; for he was proud of his brother; he had admired his early talents, and had heard of the progress he had made in his art. With a proud heart and a delighted eye, Peter unpacked his paintings and placed them round the room for the inspection of his brother; and great was his brother's admiration.

"What may be their value, Peter?" inquired Paul.

"Between ourselves, Paul," replied Peter, "I would not part with the lot under a thousand guineas!"

"A thousand guineas!" ejaculated the student in surprise; "do you say so?"

"Yes, I say it," answered the painter with importance. "Look ye, Paul—observe this bridal party at the altar—see the blush on the bride's cheek, the joy in the bridegroom's eye—is it not natural? And look at the grouping!—observe the warmth of the colouring, the breadth of effect, the depth of shade, the freedom of touch! Now, tell me candidly as a brother, is it not a gem?"

"It is certainly beautiful," answered Paul.

"I tell you what," continued the artist—"though I say it who should not say it, I have seen worse things sold for a thousand guineas."

"You don't say so!" responded the astonished student, and he wished that he had been an artist instead of a scholar.

"I do," added Peter; "and now, Paul, what do you think I intend to do with the money which this will bring?"

"How should I know, brother?" returned the other.

"Why, then," said he, "I am resolved to pay off the mortgage on our father's property, that the old man may spend the remainder of his days in comfort."

Paul wept, and taking his brother's hand said, "And if you do, the property shall be yours, Peter."

"Never, brother!" replied the other—"rather than rob you of your birthright, I would cut my hand off."

The pictures were again packed up, and the brothers went out in quest of the Secretary to the exhibition, in order to have them submitted to the Committee for admission. The Secretary received them with politeness; he said he was afraid that they could not find room for so many pieces as Mr Donaldson mentioned, for they wished to give every one a fair chance; but he desired him to forward the pictures, and he would see what could be done for them. The paintings were sent, and Peter heard no more of them for a week, when a printed catalogue and perpetual ticket were sent to him with the Secretary's compliments. Peter's eyes ran over the catalogue—at length they fell upon "*No.* 210. *A Bridal Party—P. Donaldson,*" and again, "*No.* 230. *Dead Game—P. Donaldson;*" but his name did not again occur in the whole catalogue. This was a disappointment; but it was some consolation that his favourite piece had been chosen.

Next day the exhibition opened, and Peter and Paul visited it together. The "Bridal Party" was a small picture with a modest frame, and they anxiously sought round the room in which it was said to be placed; but they saw it not. At length, "Here it is," said Paul—and there indeed it was, thrust into a dark corner of the room, the frame touching the floor, literally crushed and overshadowed beneath a glaring battle piece, six feet in length, and with a frame seven inches in depth. It was impossible to examine it without going upon your knees. Peter's indignation knew no bounds. He would have torn the picture from its hiding-place, but Paul prevented him. They next looked for No. 230; and, to increase the indignation of the artisit, it, with twenty others, was huddled into the passage, where, as Milton saith, there was

"No light, but rather darkness visible."

Or, as Spencer hath it—

"A little gloomy light much like a shade

For fourteen days did Peter visit the exhibition, and return to the lodgings of his brother, sorrowful and disappointed. The magical word SOLD was not yet attached to the painting which was to redeem his father's property.

One evening, Paul being engaged with his pupils, the artist had gone into a tavern, to drown the bitterness of his disappointment for a few moments with a bottle of ale. The keenness of his feelings had rendered him oblivious; and in his abstraction and misery he had spoken aloud of his favourite painting, the *Bridal Party*. Two young *gentlemen* sat in the next box; they either were not in the room when he entered, or he did not observe them. They overheard the monologue to which the artist had unconsciously given utterance, and it struck them as a prime jest to lark with his misery. The words "Splendid piece yon *Bridal Party;*"—"Beautiful!"—"Production of a master!"—"Wonderful that it *sold* in such a bad light and shameful situation!" fell upon Peter's ears. He started up—he hurried round to the box where they sat—

"Gentlemen," he exclaimed eagerly, "do you speak of the painting No. 210 in the exhibition?'

"Of the same, sir," was the reply.

"I am the artist!—I painted it," cried Peter.

"You, sir! you!" cried both the gentlemen at once, "give us your hand, sir—we are proud of having the honour of seeing you."

"Yes, sir," returned one of them; "we left the exhibition to-day just before it closed, and had the pleasure of seeing the porter attach the ticket to it."

"Glorious!—joy! joy!" cried Peter, running in ecstasy to the bell and ringing it violently; and as the waiter entered, he added—"A bottle of claret!—claret, boy!—claret!" And he sat down to treat the gentlemen who had announced to him the glad tidings. They drank long and deep, till Peter's head came in contact with the table, and sleep sealed up his eyelids. When aroused by the landlord who presented his bill, his companions were gone; and, stupid as Peter was, he recollected for the first time that his pocket did not contain funds to discharge the reckoning, and he left his watch with the tavern-keeper, promising to redeem it the next day when he received the price of his picture. I need not tell you what a miserable day that next day was to him, when, with his head aching with the fumes of the wine, he found that he had been duped—that his picture was not sold. The exhibition closed for the season—he had spent his last shil ing, and Paul was as poor as Peter; but the former borrowed a guinea to pay his brother's fare on the outside of the coach to ——.

Andrew Donaldson continued to struggle hard; but struggle as he would, he could not pay the interest of the mortgage. Disappointment, sorrow, humbled vanity, and the laugh of the world, were too much for him; and, shortly after Peter's visit to Edinburgh, he died, repenting that he had ever pursued the phantom Fashion, or sought after the rottenness of wealth.

"And what," inquired I, "became of Mrs Donaldson and her sons Paul and Peter?"

"Peter, sir," continued the narrator, "rose to eminence in his profession; and, redeeming the mortgage on Lottery Hall, he gave it as a present to his brother Paul, who opened it as an establishment for young gentlemen. His mother resides with him—and, sir, Paul hath spoken unto you; he hath given you the history of Lottery Hall."



WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE CRIPPLE
OR
EBENEZER THE DISOWNED.

It is proverbial to say, with reference to particular constitutions or habits of body, that May is a *trying* month, and we have known what it is to experience its trials in the sense signified. With our grandmothers too, yea, and with our grandfathers also, May was held to be an unlucky month. Nevertheless, it is a lovely, it is a beautiful month, and the forerunner of the most healthy of the twelve. It is like a timid maiden blushing into womanhood, wooing and yet shrinking from the admiration which her beauty compels. The buds, the blossoms, the young leaves, the tender flowers, the glittering dew-drops, and the song of birds, burst from the grasp of winter as if the God of Nature whispered in the sunbeams—"Let there be life!" But it is in the morning only, and before the business of the world summons us to its mechanical and artificial realities, that the beauties of May can be felt in all their freshness. We read of the glories of Eden, and that the earth was cursed because of man's transgression; yet, when we look abroad upon the glowing landscape, above us and around us, and behold the pure heavens like a sea of music floating over us, and hear the earth answer it back in varied melody, while mountain, wood, and dale, seem dreaming in the sound and stealing into loveliness, we almost wonder that a bad man should exist in the midst of a world that is still so beautiful, and where every object around him is a representative of the wisdom, the goodness, the mercy the purity, and the omnipotence of his Creator. There is a language in the very wild-flowers among our feet that breathes a lesson of virtue. We can appreciate the feeling with which the poet beheld

"The *last* rose of summer left blooming alone;"

but in the firstlings of the spring, the primrose, the lily, and their early train, there is an appeal that passes beyond our senses. They are like the lispings and the smiles of infancy—lowly preachers, emblems of our own immortality, and we love them like living things. They speak to us of childhood and the scenes of youth, and *memory* dwells in their very fragrance. Yes, May is a beautiful month—it is a month of fair sights and of sweet sounds. To it belongs the lowly primrose blushing by the brae-side in congregated beauty, with here and there a cowslip bending over them like a lover among the flowers; the lily hanging its head by the brook that reflects its image, like a bride at the altar, as if conscious of its own loveliness; the hardy daisy on the green sward, like a proud man struggling in penury with the storms of fate. Now too, the blossoms on a thousand trees unfold their rainbow hues; the tender leaves seem instinct with life, and expand to the sunbeams; and the bright fields, like an emerald sea, wave their first undulations to the breeze. The lark pours down a flood of melody on the nest of its mate, and the linnet trills a lay of love to its partner from the yellow furze. The chaffinch chaunts in the hedge its sweet but unvaried *line of music;* the thrush hymns his bold roundelay, and the blackbird swells the chorus, while the bird of spring sends its voice from the glens, like a wandering echo lost between love and sadness; and the swallow, newly returned from warmer climes or its winter sleep,

"Twitters from the straw-built shed.'

The insect tribe leap into being, countless in numbers and matchless in livery, and their low hum swims like the embodiment of a dream in the air. The May-fly invites the angler to the river, while the minnow gambols in the brook; the young salmon sports and sparkles in the stream, and the grey trout glides slowly beneath the shadow of a rock in the deep pool. To enjoy for a single hour in a May morning the luxuries which nature spreads around—to wander in its fields and in its woods—to feel ourselves a part of God's glad creation—to *feel* the gowan under our feet, and health circulating through our veins with the refreshing breeze is a recipe worth all in the Materia Medica.

Now, it was before sunrise on such a morning in May as I have described, that a traveller left the Black Bull, in Wooler, and proceeded to the Cheviots. He took his route by way of Earle and Langleeford; and, at the latter place, leaving the long and beautiful glen, began to ascend the mountain. On the cairn, which is perhaps about five hundred yards from what is called the extreme summit of the mountain, he met an old and intelligent shepherd, from whom he heard many tales, the legends of the mountains—and amongst others, the following story:—

Near the banks of one of the romantic streams which take their rise among the Cheviots, stood a small and pleasant, and what might be termed respectable or genteel-looking building. It stood like the home of solitude, encircled by mountains from the world. Beneath it, the rivulet wandered over its rugged bed; to the east rose Cheviot, the giant of the hills; to the west, lesser mountains reared their fantastic forms, thinly studded here and there with dwarf allers which the birds of heaven had planted, and their progeny had nestled in their branches; to the north and the south stretched a long and secluded glen, where beauty blushed in the arms of wildness—and thick woods, where the young fir and the oak of the ancient forest grew together, flourished beneath the shelter of the hills. Fertility also smiled by the sides of the rivulet, though the rising and setting sun threw the shadows of barrenness over it. Around the cottage stood a clump of solitary firs, and behind it an enclosure of allers, twisted together, sheltered a garden from the storms that swept down the hills.

Now, many years ago, a stranger woman, who brought with her a female domestic and a male infant, became the occupant of this house among the hills. She lived more luxuriously than the sheep-farmers in the neighbourhood, and her accent was not that of the Borders. She was between forty and fifty years of age, and her stature and strength were beyond the ordinary stature and strength of women. Her manners were repulsive, and her bearing haughty; but it seemed the haughtiness of a weak and uneducated mind. Her few neighbours, simple though they

were, and little as they saw or knew of the world, its inhabitants and its manners, perceived that the stranger who had come amongst them had not been habituated to the affluence or easy circumstances with which she was then surrounded. The child also was hard-favoured, and of a disagreeable countenance—his back was strangely deformed—his feet were distorted, and his limbs of unequal length. No one could look upon the child without a feeling of compassion, save the woman who was his mother, his nurse, or his keeper, (for none knew in what relation she stood to him,) and she treated him as a persecutor who hated his sight, and was weary of his existence.

She gave her name as Mrs Baird; and, as the child grew up, she generally in derision called him "*Esop*," or, in hatred—"the little monster!" but the woman-servant called him Ebenezer, though she treated him with a degree of harshness only less brutal than her whom he began to call mother. We shall, therefore, in his history mention him by the name of Ebenezer Baird. As he grew in years, the disagreeable expression of his countenance became stronger, his deformity and lameness increased, and the treatment he had experienced added to both.

When nine years of age, he was sent to a boarding-school about twelve miles distant. Here a new series of persecutions awaited him. Until the day of his entering the school, he was almost ignorant that there was an alphabet. He knew not a letter. He had seen one or two books, but he knew not their use—he had never seen any one look upon them—he regarded them merely as he did a picture, a piece of useless furniture, or a plaything. Lame as he was, he had climbed the steep and the dripping precipice for the eggs of the water ouzel—sought among the crags for the young of the gorgeous kingfisher, or climbed the tallest trees in quest of the crested wrens, which chirped and fluttered in invisible swarms among the branches.* The birds were to him companions; he wished to rear their young that they might love him, for there was a lack of something in his heart—he knew not what it was—but it was the void of being beloved, of being regarded. It is said that Nature abhors a vacuum, and so did the heart of Ebenezer. He knew not what name to give it, but he longed for something that would shew a liking for him, and to which he could shew a liking in return. The heart is wicked, but it is not unsocial—its affections wither in solitariness. When he strolled forth on these rambles about the glen, having asked the permission of his mother or keeper (call her what you will) before he went—"Go, imp! Esop!" she was wont to exclaim, "and I shall pray that you may break your neck before you return." There were no farmers' or shepherds' children within several miles—he had seen some of them, and when they had seen him, they had laughed at his deformity—they had imitated his lameness, and contorted their countenances into a caricatured resemblance of his. Such were poor Ebenezer's acquirements, and such his acquaintance with human nature, when he entered the boarding-school. A primer was put into his hands. "What must I do with it?" thought Ebenezer. He beheld the rod of correction in the hands of the teacher, and he trembled—for his misshapen shoulders were familiar with such an instrument. He heard others read—he saw them write—and he feared, wondered, and trembled the more. He thought that he would be called upon to do the same, and he knew he could not. He had no idea of *learning*—he had never heard of such a thing. He thought that he must do as he saw others doing at once, and he cast many troubled looks at the lord of a hundred boys. When the name of "Ebenezer Baird" was called out, he burst into tears, he sobbed, terror overwhelmed him. But when the teacher approached him kindly—took him from his seat—placed him between his knees—patted his head, and desired him to speak after him, the heart of the little cripple was assured, and more than assured; it was the first time he had experienced kindness, and he could have fallen on the ground and hugged the knees of his master. The teacher, indeed, found Ebenezer the most ignorant scholar he had ever met with, but he was no tyrant of the birch, though to his pupils

> "A man severe he was, and stern to view;"

and though he had all the manners and austerity of the old school about him, he did not lay his head upon the pillow with his arm tired by the incessant use of the ferula. He was touched with the simplicity and the extreme ignorance of his new boarder, and he felt also for his lameness and deformity. Thrice he went over the alphabet with his pupil commencing—"*Big Aw—Little Aw*," and having got over *b*, he told him to remember that *c* was like a half moon—"Ye'll aye mind *c* again," added he, "think ye *see* the moon." Thus they went on to *g*, and he asked him what the carters said to their horses when they wished them to go faster; but this Ebenezer could not tell—carts and horses were sights that he had seen as objects of wonder. They are but seldom seen amongst the hills now, and in those days they were almost unknown. Getting over *h*, he strove to impress *i* upon the memory of his pupil, by touching the solitary grey orbit in his countenance, (for Ebenezer had but one,) and asking him what he called it—"my *e'e*," answered Ebenezer.

"No, sir, you must not say your *e'e*, but your *eye*—mind that, and that letter is *I*."

The teacher went on, shewing him that he could not forget round O, and crooked S; and in truth, after his first lesson, Ebenezer was master of these two letters. And, afterwards, when the teacher in trying him promiscuously through the alphabet, would inquire—"What letter is this?" "I no ken," the cripple would reply, "but I'm sure its no O and it's no S." Within a week he was master of the six-and-twenty mystical symbols, with the exception of four—and those four were *b* and *d*, *p* and *q*. Ebenezer could not for three months be brought to distinguish the *b* from the *d*, nor the *p* from the *q*; but he had never even heard that he had a right hand and a left until he came to the school—and how could it be expected?

Scarce, however, had he mastered the alphabet, until the faculties of the deformed began to expand. He now both understood and felt what it was to learn. He passed from class to class with a rapidity that astonished his teacher. He could not join in the boisterous sports of his schoolfellows, and while they were engaged in their pastime, he sought solitude, and his task accompanied him. He possessed strong natural talents, and his infirmities gave them the assistance of industry. His teacher noted these things in the cripple, and he was gratified with them, but he hesitated to express his feelings openly, lest the charge of partiality should be brought against him. Ebenezer, however, had entered the academy as the butt of his schoolfellows—they mocked, they mimicked, they tormented, they despised, or affected to despise him; and his talents and progress, instead of abating their persecutions, augmented them. His teacher was afraid to shew him more kindness than he shewed to others; and his schoolfellows gloried in annoying the cripple—they persecuted, they shunned, they hated him more than even his mother did. He began to hate the world, for he had found none that would love him. His teacher was the only human being that had ever whispered to him words of praise or of kindness, and that had always been in cold, guarded, and measured terms.

* The water ouzel, the kingfisher, and the crested wren, abound in the vicinity of the Cheviots—though the latter beautiful little creature is generally considered as quite a *rara avis*—and last year one being shot about Cumberland, the circumstance went the round of the newspapers! But the bird is not rare, it is only difficult to be seen, and generally flutters among the leaves and near the top branches.

Before he was eighteen he had acquired all the knowledge that his teacher could impart, and he returned to the cottage among the mountains. There, however, he was again subjected to a persecution more barbarous than that which he had met with from his schoolfellows. Mrs Baird mocked, insulted, and drove him from her presence; and her domestic shewed him neither kindness nor respect. In stature, he scarcely exceeded five feet; and his body was feeble as well as deformed. The cruelty with which he had been treated had given an asperity to his temper, and made him almost a hater of the human race; and these feelings had lent their character to his countenance, marking its naturally harsh expression with suspicion and melancholy.

He was about five-and-twenty when the pangs and the terrors of death fell upon her whom he regarded as his parent. She died, as a sinner dies—with insulted eternity frowning to receive her. A few minutes before her death, she desired the cripple to approach her bedside. She fixed her closing eyes, which affection had never lighted, upon his. She informed him that he was not her son.

"Oh, tell me then, whose son am I? Who are my parents?" he exclaimed eagerly—"speak! speak!"

"Your parents!" she muttered, and remorse and ignorance held her departing soul in their grasp. She struggled, she again continued—"Your parents—no, Ebenezer! no!—I dare not name them. I have sworn!—I have sworn!—and a deathbed is no time to break an oath!"

"Speak! Speak!—tell me, as you hope for heaven!" cried the cripple, with his thin, bony fingers grasping the wrists of the dying woman.

"Monster! monster!" she screamed wildly and in terror, "leave me! leave me!—you are provided for—open that chest—the chest!—the chest!"

Ebenezer loosed his grasp—he sprang towards a strong chest which stood in the room. "The keys! the keys!" he exclaimed wildly, and again hurrying to the bed, he violently pulled a bunch of keys from beneath her pillow. But while he applied them to the chest, the herald of death rattled in the throat of its victim; and, with one agonizing throe and a deep groan, her spirit escaped, and her body lay a corpse upon the bed.

He opened the chest, and in it he found securities, which settled upon him, under the name of Ebenezer Baird, five thousand pounds. But there was nothing which threw light on his parentage—nothing to inform who he was, or why he was there.

The body of her who had never shed a tear over him, he accompanied to the grave. But now a deeper gloom fell upon him. He met but few men, and the few he met shunned him, for there was a wildness and a bitterness in his words—a railing against the world which they wished not to hear. He fancied, too, that they despised him—that their eyes were ever examining the form of his deformities; and he returned their glance with a scowl, and their words with the accents of hatred. Even as he passed the solitary farm-house, the younger children fled in terror, and the elder laughed or pointed towards him the finger of curiosity. All these things fell upon the heart of the cripple, and turned the human kindness of his bosom into gall. His companions became the solitude of the mountains, and the silence of the woods. They heard his bitter soliloquies without reviling him, or echo answered him in tones of sympathy more mournful than his own. He sought a thing that he might love, that might unlock his prisoned heart, or give life to its blighted feelings. He loved the very primrose, because it was a thing of beauty, and shrank not from his deformity as man did. To him it gave forth its sweetness, and its leaves withered not at his touch; and he bent and kissed the flower that smiled upon him whom his kind avoided. He courted the very storms of winter, for they shunned him not, but spent their fury on his person, unconscious of its form. The only living thing that regarded him, or that had ever evinced affection towards him, was a dog, of the mastiff kind, which ever followed at his side, licked his hand, and received its food from it. And on this living thing all the affections that his heart ever felt were expended. He loved it as a companion, a friend, and protector; and he knew it was not ungrateful—it never avoided him; but when mockery or insult was offered to its master, it growled, and looked in his face, as if asking permission to punish the offender.

Such was the life that he had passed until he was between thirty and forty years of age. Still he continued his solitary rambles, having a feeling for everything around him but man. Man only was his persecutor—man only despised him. His own kind and his own kindred had shut him out from them and disowned him—his sight had been hateful to them, and his form loathsome. He avoided the very sun for it revealed his shadow; but he wandered, in rapture, gazing on the midnight heavens, calling the stars by name, while his soul was lifted up with their glory, and his deformity lost and overshadowed in the depth of their magnificence. He loved the flowers of day, the song of morning's birds, and the wildness or beauty of the landscapes, but these dwindled, and drew not forth his soul as did the awful gorgeousness of night, with its ten thousand worlds lighted up, burning, sparkling, glimmering in immensity—the gems that studded the throne of the Eternal. While others slept, the deformed wandered on the mountains, holding communion with the heavens.

About the period we refer to, a gay party came upon a visit to a gentleman whose mansion was situated about three miles from the cottage of the cripple. As they rode out, they frequently passed him in his wanderings—and when they did so, some turned to gaze on him with a look of prying curiosity, others laughed and called to their companions, and the indignation of Ebenezer was excited, and the frown grew black upon his face.

He was wandering in a wood in the glen, visiting his favourite wild-flowers, (for he had many that he visited daily, and each was familiar to him as the face of man to man—he rejoiced when they budded, blossomed, and laughed in their summer joy, and he grieved when they withered and died away,) when a scream of distress burst upon his ear. His faithful mastiff started and answered to the sound. He hurried from the wood to whence the sound proceeded, as rapidly as his lameness would admit. The mastiff followed by his side, and by its signs of impatience, seemed eager to increase its speed, though it would not forsake him. The cries of distress continued and became louder. On emerging from the wood he perceived a young lady rushing, wildly, towards it, and behind her, within ten yards, followed an infuriated bull. In a few moments more, and she must have fallen its victim. With an eager howl, the dog sprang from the side of its master, and stood between the lady and her pursuer. Ebenezer forgot his lameness, and the feebleness of his frame, and he hastened at his utmost speed to the rescue of a human being. Even at that moment a glow of delight passed through his heart, that the despised cripple would save the life of a fellow-mortal—of one of the race that shunned him. Ere he approached, the lady had fallen, exhausted and in terror, on the ground—the mastiff kept the enraged animal at bay, and, with a strength such as he had never before exhibited, Ebenezer raised the lady in his arms and bore her to the wood. He placed her against a tree—the stream passed by within a few yards, and he brought water in the palms of his hands and knelt over her, to bathe her temples and her fair brow. Her brow was, indeed, fair, and her face beautiful beyond all that he had looked upon. Her golden hair, in wavy ringlets, fell upon her shoulders—but her deep blue eyes were closed. Her years did not appear to be more than twenty.

"Beautiful!—beautiful!" exclaimed the cripple, as he dropped the water on her face, and gazed on it as he spoke—"it is wondrous beautiful! But she will open her eyes—she will turn from me as doth her race!—as from the animal that pursued her!—yet, sure she is beautiful!" and again, as he spoke, Ebenezer sighed.

The fair being recovered—she raised her eyes—she gazed on his face, and turned not away from it. She expressed no false horror on beholding his countenance—no affected revulsion at the sight of his deformity; but she looked upon him with gratitude—she thanked him with tears. The cripple started—his heart burned. To be gazed on with kindness, to be thanked and with tears, and by one so fair, so young, so beautiful, was to him so strange, so new, he half doubted the reality of the scene before him. Before the kindness and gratitude that beamed from her eyes, the misanthropy that had frozen up his bosom began to dissolve, and the gloom on his features died away, as a vapour before the face of the morning sun. New thoughts fired his imagination—new feelings transfixed his heart. Her smile fell like a sunbeam on his soul, where light had never before dawned; her accents of gratitude, from the moment they were delivered, became the music of his memory. He found an object on the earth that he could love—or shall we say that he *did* love; for he felt as though already her existence were mysteriously linked to his. We are no believers in what is termed—*love at first sight*. Some romance writers hold it up as an established doctrine, and love-sick boys and moping girls will make oath to the creed. But there never was love at first sight that a week's perseverance could not wear away. It holds no intercourse with the heart, but is a mere *fancy* of the eye; as a man would fancy a horse, a house, or a picture which he desires to purchase. Love is not the offspring of an hour or a day, nor is it the *ignis-fatuus* which plays about the brain, and disturbs the sleep of the youth and the maiden in their teens. It slowly steals and dawns upon the heart, as day imperceptibly creeps over the earth, first with the tinged cloud—the grey and the clearer dawn—the approaching, the rising, and the risen sun—blending into each other a brighter and a brighter shade; but each indistinguishable in their progress and blending, as the motion of the pointers on a watch, which move unobserved as time flies, and we note not the silent progress of light till it envelope us in its majesty. Such is the progress of pure, holy, and enduring love. It springs not from mere sight, but its radiance grows with esteem; it is the whisper of sympathy, unity of feeling, and mutual reverence, which increases with a knowledge of each other, until but one pulse seems to throb in two bosoms. The feelings which now swelled in the bosom of Ebenezer Baird were not the true and only love which springs from esteem, but they were akin to it. For though the beauty of the fair being he had rescued had struck his eye, it was not her beauty that melted the misanthropy of his heart, but the tear of gratitude, the voice of thanks, the glance that turned not away from him, the smile—the first that woman had bestowed on him—that entered his soul. They came from the heart, and they spoke to the heart.

She informed him that her name was Maria Bradbury, and that she was one of the party then on a visit to the gentleman in his neighbourhood. He offered to accompany her to the house, and she accepted his offer. But it was necessary to pass near the spot where he had rescued her from the fury of the enraged bull. As they drew towards the side of the wood, they perceived that the bull was gone, but the noble mastiff, the friend, companion, and defender of the cripple, lay dead before them. Ebenezer wrung his hands, he mourned over his faithful guardian. 'Friend! poor Friend!" he cried—(the name of the mastiff was Friend)—"hast thou too left me? Thou, of all the things that lived, alone didst love thy master. Pardon m lady—pardon an outcast; but until this hour I have never experienced friendship from man nor kindness from woman. The human race have treated me as a thing that belonged not to the same family with themselves; they have persecuted or mocked me, and I have hated them. Start not—hatred is an alien to my soul—it was not born there, it was forced upon it—but I hate not you—no! no! You have spoken kindly to me, you have smiled on me!—the despised, the disowned Ebenezer will remember you. That poor dog, alone, of all living things, shewed affection for me. But he died in a good cause! Poor Friend! poor Friend!—where shall I find a companion now?" and the tears of the cripple ran down his cheeks as he spoke.

Maria wept also, partly for the fate of the noble animal that had died in her deliverance, and partly from the sorrow of her companion; for there is a sympathy in tears.

"Ha! you weep!" cried the cripple, "you weep for poor Friend and for me. Bless thee! bless thee, fair one!—they are the first that were ever shed for my sake—I thought there was not a tear on earth for me."

He accompanied her to the lodge of the mansion where she was then residing, and there he left her, though she invited him to accompany her, that he might also receive the congratulations of her friends.

She related to them her deliverance. Ha! little Ebenezer turned a hero!" cried one—"Ebenezer the cripple become a knight-errant!" said another. But they resolved to visit him in a body and return him their thanks.

But the soul of the deformed was now changed, and his countenance, though still melancholy, had lost its asperity His days became a dream, his existence a wish. For the first time he entertained the hope of happiness—it was vain, romantic, perhaps we might say absurd, but he cherished it.

Maria spoke much of the courage, the humanity, the seeming loneliness, and the knowledge of the deformed, to her friends; and their entertainer, with his entire party or visiters, with but one exception, a few days afterwards proceeded to the cottage of Ebenezer, to thank him for his intrepidity. The exception we have alluded to was a Lady Helen Dorrington, a woman of a proud and haughty temper, and whose personal attractions, if she ever possessed any, were now disfigured by the attacks of a violent temper, and the *crow-feet* and the *wrinkles*, which threescore years imprint on the fairest countenance. She excused herself by saying, that the sight of deformed people affected her. Amongst the party who visited the cripple, was her son, Francis Dorrington, a youth of two-and-twenty, who was haughty, fiery, and impetuous as his mother. He sought the hand of Maria Bradbury, and he now walked by her side.

Ebenezer received them coldly; amongst them were many who were wont to mock him as they passed, and he now believed that they had come to gratify curiosity, by gazing on his person as on a wild animal. But, when he saw the smile upon Maria's lips, the benign expression of her glance, and her hand held forth to greet him, his coldness vanished, and joy, like a flash of sunshine, lighted up his features. Yet, he liked not the impatient scowl with which Francis Dorrington regarded her attention towards him, nor the contempt which moved visibly on his lip when she listened delighted to the words of the despised cripple. He seemed to act as though her eyes should be fixed on him alone—her words addressed only to him Jealousy entered the soul of the deformed; and shall we say that the same feeling was entertained by the gay and the haughty Dorrington? It was He felt that, insignificant as the outward appearance of the cripple was, his soul was that of an intellectual giant, before the exuberance of whose power the party were awed, and Maria lost in admiration. His tones were musical, as his figure was unsightly, and his knowledge universal as his person was diminutive. He discoursed with

a poet's tongue on the beauty of the surrounding scenery; he defined the botany and geology of the mountains. He traced effect to cause, and both to their Creator. The party marvelled while the deformed spoke; and he repelled the scowl and contempt of his rival with sarcasm that scathed like a passing lightning. These things produced feelings of jealousy also in the breast of Francis Dorrington; though from Maria Bradbury he had never received one smile of encouragement. On their taking leave, the entertainer of the party invited Ebenezer to his house, but the latter refused; he feared to mingle with society, for oft as he had associated with man, he had been rendered their sport—the thing they persecuted—the butt of their irony.

For many days the cripple met, or rather sought Maria, in his solitary rambles; for she, too, loved the solitude of the mountains or the silence of the woods, which is broken only by the plaintive note of the wood-pigeon, the *chirm* of the linnet, the song of the thrush, the twitter of the chaffinch, or the distant stroke of the woodman, lending silence a charm. She had become familiar with his deformity, and as it grew less singular to her eyes, his voice became sweeter to her ears. Their conversation turned on many things—there was wisdom in his words, and she listened to him as a pupil to a preceptor. His feelings deepened with their interviews, his hopes brightened, and felicity seemed dawning before him. As hope kindled, he acquired confidence. They were walking together, he had pointed out the beauties and explained the properties of the wild flowers on their path, he had dwelt on the virtues of the humblest weed, when he stopped short, and gazing in her face—"Maria!" he added, "I have loved these flowers—I have cherished those simple weeds, because they shunned me not—they shrank not from me, as did the creatures of the human race—they spread their beauties before me—they denied me not their sweetness. You only have I met with among the children of Adam, who persecuted me not with ridicule, or who insulted not my deformity with the vulgar gaze of curiosity. Who I am I know not—from whence I was brought amongst these hills I cannot tell—I am a thing which the world has laughed at, and of which my parents were ashamed. But my wants have been few. I have gold to purchase flattery if I desired it—to buy tongues to tell me I am not deformed; but I despise them. My soul partakes not of my body's infirmities—it has sought a spirit to love, that would love it in return. Maria, has it found one?"

Maria was startled—she endeavoured to speak, but her tongue faltered—tears gathered in her eyes, and her looks bespoke pity and astonishment.

"Fool! fool!" exclaimed the cripple, "I have been deceived! Maria *pities* me!—*only pities me!* Hate me, Maria—despise me as does the world. I can bear hatred—I can endure scorn—I can repel them!—but *pity* consumes me!—and *pity* from you! Fool! fool!" he added, "wherefore dreamed I there was one that would look with love on deformed Ebenezer? Farewell, Maria! farewell!—remember, but do not pity me!" and he hurried from her side.

She would have detained him—she would have told him that she reverenced him—that she esteemed him; but he hastened away, and she felt also that she *pitied* him—and *love* and *pity* can never dwell in the same breast, for the same object. Maria stood and wept.

Ebenezer returned to his cottage; but the hope which he had cherished, the dream which he had fed, died reluctantly. He accused himself for acting precipitately—he believed he had taken the tear of affection for pity. His heart was at war with itself. Day after day he revisited the mountain-side, and the path in the wood where they had met, but Maria wandered there no longer. His feelings, his impatience, his incertitude, rose superior to the ridicule of man—he resolved to visit the mansion of his neighbour, where Maria and her friends were residing. The dinner bell was ringing as he approached the house; but he knew little of the etiquette of the world, and respected not its forms. The owner of the mansion welcomed him with the right hand of cordiality, for his discourse in the cottage had charmed him; others expressed welcome, for some who before had mocked now respected him, and Maria took his hand with a look of joy and her wonted sweetness. The heart of Ebenezer felt assured. Francis Dorrington alone frowned, and rose not to welcome him.

The dinner bell again rang; the Lady Helen had not arrived, and dinner was delayed for her, but she came not. They proceeded to the dining-room. Ebenezer offered his arm to Maria, and she accepted it. Francis Dorrington muttered angry words between his teeth. The dinner passed—the dessert was placed upon the table—Lady Helen entered the room—she prayed to be excused for her delay—her host rose to introduce her to Ebenezer.

"Ebenezer!—the deformed!" she exclaimed in a tone of terror, and dashing her hands before her eyes as he rose before her, she fell back in hysterics.

"Turn the monster from the house!" cried Francis Dorrington, springing forward, "my mother cannot endure the sight of such."

"Whom call ye monster, young man?" said Ebenezer angrily.

"You—wretch!" replied Dorrington, raising his hand, and striking the cripple to the floor.

"Shame! shame!" exclaimed the company.

"Coward!" cried Maria, starting from her seat.

The cripple, with a rapidity that seemed impossible, sprang to his feet—he gasped, he trembled, every joint shook, rage boiled in his veins—he glanced at his insulter, who attempted to repeat the blow—he uttered a yell of vengeance, he clutched a dessert knife from the table, and within a moment, it was plunged in the body of the man who had injured him.

A scream of horror burst from the company. Ebenezer, with the reeking knife in his grasp, stood trembling from rage, not from remorse. But he offered not to repeat the blow. A half-consciousness of what he had done seemed to stay his hand. The sudden scream of the party aroused the lady Helen from her real or affected fit. She beheld her son bleeding on the floor—she saw the vengeful knife in the hands of the cripple. She screamed more wildly than before—she wrung her hands! "Monster!—murderer!" she exclaimed, "he has slain!—*he has slain his brother!*"

"*My brother!*" shouted Ebenezer, still grasping the knife in his hand—"woman! woman!—mother! mother!—who am I?—answer me, who are you?" and he sprang forward and held her by the arm. "Tell me," he continued, "what mean ye?—what mean ye?—my *brother*—do ye say my *brother?* Art thou my *mother?* Have I a *mother?* Speak!—speak!" and he grasped her arm more fiercely.

"Monster!" she repeated, "offspring of my shame!—away! away!—*he is thy brother!* I have shunned thee, wretch—I have disowned thee—but thou hast carried murder to my bosom!" and tearing her arm from his grasp, she threw it round the neck of her wounded son.

The company gazed upon each other. Ebenezer stood for a moment, his eyes rolling, his teeth rattling together, the knife shaking in his hand. He uttered a wild cry of agony—he tore the garments from his breast, as though it were ready to burst, and with the look and the howl of a maniac, he sprang to the door and disappeared. Some from an interest in his fate, others from a desire to secure him, followed after him. But he fled to the woods and they traced him not.

It was found that the wound of Francis Dorrington was not mortal, and the fears of the company were directed from him to Ebenezer, whom they feared had laid violent hands upon his own life

On the following day, without again meeting the company, Lady Helen left the house, having acknowledged the deformed Ebenezer to be her son—a child of shame—whose birth had been concealed from the world.

On the third day the poor cripple was found by a shepherd, wandering on the hills—his head was uncovered—his garments and his body were torn by the brambles through which he had rushed. His eyes rolled wildly, and, when accosted, he fled, exclaiming—"I am Cain!—I am Cain!—I have slain my brother!—touch me not—the mark is on my forehead!"

He was secured and taken to a place of safety.

The circumstances twined round Maria's heart—she heard no more of Ebenezer the cripple, but she forgot him not. Several years passed, and she, together with a friend, visited a lunatic asylum, in a distant part of the country, in which a female acquaintance, once the admired of society, had become an inmate. They were shewn round the different wards—some of the inmates seemed happy, others melancholy, but all were mild; all shrank from the eye of their keeper. The sounds of the clanking chains, around their ancles, filled Maria's soul with horror, and she longed to depart. But the keeper invited them to visit the garden of his asylum. They entered, and beheld several quiet-looking people engaged in digging; others were pruning trees; and some sat upon benches on the paths, playing with their fingers, striking their heels upon the ground, or reading stray leaves of an old book or a newspaper. Each seemed engaged with himself—none conversed with his neighbour. Upon a bench, near the entrance to a small arbour or summer-house, sat a female, conning an old ballad; and, as she perused it, she laughed, wept, and sang by turns. Maria stopped to converse with her, and her friend entered the arbour. In it sat a grey-headed and deformed man; he held a volume of Savage in his hand, which had then been but a short time published.

'I am reading '*The Bastard*,' by Savage," said he, as the stranger entered, "he is my favourite author. His fate was mine—he describes my feelings. He had an unnatural mother—so had I. He was disowned—so was I. He slew a man, and so did I—but I my brother."

The voice, the words, fell upon Maria's ear. She became pale, she glanced towards the arbour—she cast an inquiring look upon the keeper.

"Fear not, ma'am," he replied, "he is an innocent creature. He does not rave now—and but that there is an occasional wildness in his language, he is as well as you are. Enter and converse with him, ma'am; he is a great speaker, and to much purpose, too, as visiters tell me."

She entered the arbour. The cripple's eyes met hers—he threw down the book. "Maria!—Maria!" he exclaimed, "this is kind!—this is kind, indeed!—but do not *pity* me—do not *pity me again!* Hate me Maria!—you saw me slay my brother!"

She informed him that his brother was not dead—that he had recovered within a few weeks.

"Not dead!" replied the cripple "thank Heaven; Ebenezer is not a murderer But I am well now—the fever of my brain is passed. Go, Maria, do this for me, it is all I now ask—inquire why I am here immured, and by whose authority; suffer not my reason to be buried in reason's tomb, and crushed among its wrecks. Your smile, your words of kindness, your tears of gratitude caused me to dream once—and its remembrance is still as a speck of light amidst the darkness of my bosom—but these grey hairs have broken the dream"—and Ebenezer bent his head upon his breast, and sighed.

Maria and her friend left the asylum, but in a few weeks they returned, and when they again departed, Ebenezer Baird went with them. He now sought not Maria's love, but he was gratified with her esteem, and that of her friends. He outlived the persecution of his kindred, and the derision of the world; and, in the forty-sixth year of his age, he died in peace, and bequeathed his property to Maria Bradbury—the first of the human race that had looked on him with kindness, or cheered him with a smile.

THE BROKEN HEART

A TALE OF THE REBELLION

Early in the November of 1745, the news reached Cambridge that Charles Stuart, at the head of his hardy and devoted Highlanders, had crossed the Borders, and taken possession of Carlisle. The inhabitants gazed upon each other with terror, for the swords of the clansmen had triumphed over all opposition; they were regarded, also, by the multitude as savages, and by the more ignorant as cannibals. But there were others who rejoiced in the success of the young Adventurer, and who, dangerous as it was to confess their joy, took but small pains to conceal it. Amongst these was James Dawson, the son of a gentleman in the north of Lancashire, and then a student at St John's College. That night he invited a party of friends to sup with him, who entertained sentiments similar to his own. The cloth was withdrawn, and he rose and gave, as the toast of the evening—"*Prince Charles—and success to him!*" His guests, fired with his own enthusiasm, rose and received the toast with cheers. The bottle went round—the young men drank deep, and other toasts of a similar nature followed. The song succeeded the toast, and James Dawson sang the following, which seemed to be the composition of the day:—

"Free, o'er the Borders, the tartan is streaming,
The dirk is unsheathed, and the claymore is gleaming,
The Prince and his clansmen in triumph advance,
Nor needs he the long-promised succours of France.
From the Cumberland mountains, and Westmoreland lake,
Each brave man shall snatch up a sword for his sake;
And the 'Lancashire Witch' on her bosom shall wear
The snow-white cockade, by her lover placed there."

But while he yet sang, and as he completed but the first verse, two constables and three or four soldiers burst into the room, and denounced them as traitors and as their prisoners.

"Down with them!" exclaimed James Dawson, springing forward, and snatching down a sword which was suspended over the mantelpiece. The students vigorously resisted the attempt to make them prisoners, and several of them, with their entertainer, escaped.

He concealed himself for a short time, when, his horse being brought, he took the road towards Manchester, in order to join the ranks of the Adventurer. It was about midday, on the 29th, when he reached the town which is now the emporium of the manufacturing world. On proceeding down Market Street, he perceived a confused crowd, some uttering threats, and others with consternation expressed on their countenance; and, in the midst of the multitude was Sergeant Dickson, a young woman, and a drummer boy, beating up for recruits. The white cockade streamed from the hat of the sergeant; the populace vented their indignation against him, but no man dared to seize him, for he continued to turn round and round, with a blunderbuss in his hand, facing the crowd on all sides, and threatening to shoot the first man that approached, who was not ready to serve the Prince, and to mount the white cockade. The young woman carried a supply of the ribbons in her hand, and ever and anon waved them in triumph, exclaiming—"Charlie yet!" Some dozen recruits already followed at the heels of the sergeant. James Dawson spurred his horse through the crowd

"Give me one of your favours," said he, addressing the sergeant.

"Ay, a dozen, your honour," replied Dickson.

He received the ribbon and tied it to his breast, and placed another at his horse's head. His conduct had an effect upon the multitude; numbers flocked around the sergeant, his favours became exhausted; and when the Prince and the army entered the town in the evening, he brought before him an hundred and eighty men, which he had that day enlisted.

The little band so raised were formed into what was called the Manchester regiment, of which the gallant Townly was made Colonel, and James Dawson one of the Captains.

Our business at present is not with the movements of Charles Edward, nor need we describe his daring march towards Derby, which struck terror throughout all England, and for a time seemed to snake the throne and its dynasty; nor dwell upon the particulars of his masterly retreat towards Scotland—suffice it to say, that on the 19th of December, the Highland army again entered Carlisle.

On the following morning they evacuated it; but the Manchester regiment, which was now composed of about three hundred men, was left as a garrison to defend the town, against the entire army of proud Cumberland. They were devoted as a sacrifice, that the Prince and the main army might be saved. The dauntless Townly, and the young and gallant Dawson, were not ignorant of the desperateness and the hopelessness of their situation; but they strove to impart their own heroism to the garrison, and to defend the town to the last. On the morning of the 21st, the entire army of the Duke of Cumberland arrived before Carlisle, and took possession of the fortifications that commanded it. He commanded the garrison to surrender, and they answered him by a discharge of musketry. They had withstood a siege of ten days, during which time Cumberland had erected batteries, and procured cannon from Whitehaven; before their fire the decaying and neglected walls of the city gave way; to hold out another day was impossible, and there was no resource left for the devoted band, but to surrender, or perish. On the 30th, a white flag was hoisted on the ramparts. On its being perceived, the cannon ceased to play upon the town, and a messenger was sent to the Duke of Cumberland, to inquire what terms he would grant to the garrison.

"Tell them," he replied haughtily, "I offer no terms but these—that they shall not be put to the sword. but they shall be reserved for his Majesty to deal with them as he may think proper."

There was no alternative, and these doubtful and evasive terms were accepted. The garrison were disarmed, and under a numerous guard placed in the cathedral.

James Dawson and seventeen others were conveyed to London, and cast into prison, to wait the will of his Majesty. Till now his parents were ignorant of the fate of their son, though they had heard of his being compelled to flee from the university, and feared that he had joined the standard of the Prince. Too soon their worst fears were realized, and the truth revealed to them. But there was another who trembled for him, whose heart felt keenly as a parent's—she who was to have been his wife, to whom his hand was plighted, and his heart given. Fanny Lester was a young and gentle being, and she had known James Dawson from their childhood. Knowledge ripened to affection, and their hearts were twined together. On the day on which she was made acquainted with his imprisonment, she hastened to London to comfort him—to cheer his gloomy solitude—at the foot of the throne to sue for his pardon.

She arrived at the metropolis—she was conducted to the prison-house, and admitted. On entering the gloomy apartment in which he was confined, she screamed aloud, she raised her hands, and springing forward, fell upon his neck and wept.

"My own Fanny!" he exclaimed, "you here!—weep not, my sweet one—come, be comforted—there is hope—every hope—I shall not die—my own Fanny be comforted."

"Yes!—yes there is hope!—the King will pardon you," she exclaimed, "he will spare my James—I will implore your life at his feet!"

"Nay, nay, love—say not the King," interrupted the young enthusiast for the house of Stuart; "it will be but imprisonment till all is over—the *Elector* cannot seek my life."

He strove long and earnestly to persuade, to assure her, that his life was not in danger—that he would be saved—and what she wished, she believed. The jailer entered, and informed them it was time that she should depart; and again sinking her head upon his breast, she wept "good night."

But each day she revisited him, and they spoke of his deliverace together. At times, too, she told him with tears of the efforts she had made to obtain his pardon—of her attempts to gain admission to the presence of the King—of the repulses she met with—of her applications to the nobility connected with the court—of the insult and inhumanity she met with from some—the compassion she experienced from others—the interest that they took in his fate, and the hopes and the promises which they held out. Upon those hopes and those promises she fondly dwelt. She looked into his eyes to perceive the hope that they kindled there, and as joy beamed from them, she half forgot that his life hung upon the word of a man.

But his parents came to visit him; hers followed her, and they joined their efforts to hers, and anxiously, daily, almost hourly, they exerted their energies to obtain his pardon. His father possessed an influence in electioneering matters in Lancashire, and hers could exercise the same in an adjoining county. That influence was now urged—the members they had supported were importuned. They promised to employ their best exertions. Whatever the feelings or principles of the elder Dawson might be, he had never avowed disaffection openly—he had never evinced a leaning to the family of Stuart—he had supported the government of the day; and the father of Fanny Lester was an upholder of the house of Hanover. The influence of all their relatives, and of all their friends, was brought into action; peers and commoners were supplicated, and they pledged their intercession. Men high in office took an interest in the fate of James Dawson, or professed to take it; promises, half official, were held out—and when his youth, the short time that he had been engaged in the rebellion, and the situation that he held in the army of the Adventurer were considered, no one doubted but that his pardon was certain—that he would not be brought to trial. Even his parents felt assured—but the word of the King was not passed.

They began to look forward to the day of his deliverance with impatience, but still with certainty. There was but one heart that feared, and it throbbed in the bosom of poor Fanny. She would start from her sleep, crying—"Save him!—save him!"as she fancied she beheld them dragging him to execution. In order to soothe her, her parents and his, in the confidence that pardon would be extended to him, agreed that the day of his liberation should be the day of their bridal. She knew their affection, and her heart struggled with her fears to believe the "flattering tale."

James tried also to cheer her—he believed that his life would be spared—he endeavoured to smile and to be happy.

"Fear not, my own Fanny," he would say; "your apprehensions are idle. The Elector"——

And here his father would interfere. "Speak not so, my son," said the old man earnestly, "speak not against princes

in your bed-chamber, for a bird of the air can carry the tidings. Your life is in the hands of a King—of a merciful one, and it is safe—only speak not thus!—do not, as you love me—as you love our Fanny, do not."

Then would they chase away her fears, and speak of the arrangements for the bridal; and Fanny would smile pensively while James held her hand in his, and, as he gazed on her finger he raised it to his lips, as though he took the measure of the ring.

But, "hope deferred maketh the heart sick;" and though they still retained their confidence that he would be pardoned, yet their anxiety increased, and Fanny's heart seemed unable longer to contain its agony and suspense. More than six months had passed, but still no pardon came for James Dawson. The fury of the civil war was spent—the royal Adventurer had escaped—the vengeance of the sword was satisfied, and the law of the conquerors, and the scaffolds of the law, called for the blood of those whom the sword had saved. The soldier laid down his weapon, and the executioner took up his. On the leaders of the Manchester regiment the vengeance of the blood-thirsty law first fell. It was on the evening of the 14th of July 1746, James Dawson sat in his prison, Fanny sat by his side with her hand in his, and his parents were present also, when the jailer entered, and ordered him to prepare to hold himself in readiness for his trial, in the court-house at St Margaret's, Southwark, on the following day. His father groaned—his mother exclaimed "my son!"—but Fanny sat motionless. No tear was in her eye—no muscle in her countenance moved. Her fingers grasped his with a firmer pressure—but she evinced no other symptom of having heard the mandate that was delivered. They rose to depart, and a low, deep sigh issued from her bosom; but she shewed no sign of violent grief—her feelings were already exhausted—her heart could bear no more.

On the following day eighteen victims, with the gallant Townly at their head, were brought forth for trial before a grand jury. Amongst them, and as one of the chief, was James Dawson. Fanny had insisted on being present. She heard the word *guilty* pronounced with a yet deeper apathy than she had evinced at the announcement of his trial. She folded her hands upon her bosom, her lips moved as in prayer, but she shed not a single tear, she breathed not a single sigh. She arose, she beckoned to her attendants, and accompanied them from the court-house.

Still his friends entertained the hope that the Pardon Power might be moved—they redoubled their exertions—they increased their importunities—they were willing to make any sacrifice so that his life might be but saved—and even then, at the eleventh hour, they hoped against hope. But Fanny yielded not to the vain thought. Day after day she sat by her lover's side, and she, in her turn, became his comforter. She no longer spoke of their bridal—but she spoke of eternity; she spoke of their meeting where the ambition, the rivalry, and the power of princes should be able to cast no cloud over the happiness of the soul.

Fourteen days had passed, and during that he betrayed no sign of terror; she evinced none of a woman's weakness. She seemed to have mastered her griefs, and her soul was prepared to meet them. Yet, save only when she spoke to him, her soul appeared entranced, and her body lifeless. On the 29th of July an order was brought for the execution of the victims on the following day. James Dawson bowed his head to the officer who delivered the warrant, and calmly answered—"I am prepared!"

The cries of his mother rang through the prison-house. She tore her hair—she sank upon the floor—she entreated Heaven to spare her child. His father groaned, he held the hand of his son in his, and the tears gushed down his furrowed cheeks. Fanny alone was silent—she alone was tranquil. No throe of agony swelled her bosom, flushed in her countenance, or burned in her eye. She was calm, speechless, resigned. He pressed her to his bosom. as they took their last farewell.

"Adieu!—adieu!—my own!" he cried—"my Fanny—farewell!—an eternal farewell!"

"Nay, nay," she replied, "say not eternal—we shall meet again. 'Tis a short farewell—I feel it—I feel it. Adieu love!—adieu! Die firmly. We shall meet soon."

Next morning the prisoners were to be dragged on sledges to Kensington Common, which was the place appointed for their execution. In the first sledge was the executioner sitting over his pinioned victims with a drawn sword in his hand. No priest—no minister of religion attended them; and around the sledges followed thousands, some few expressing sympathy, but the majority following from curiosity, and others venting their execrations against all traitors. In the midst of the multitude was a hackney coach, following the sledges, and in it was the gentle Fanny Lester, accompanied by a relative and a female friend. They had endeavoured to persuade her from the fearful trial; but she was calm, resolute, and not to be moved, and they yielded to her wish. The coach drew up within thirty yards of the scaffold; Fanny pulled down the window, and leaning over it, she beheld the piles of faggots lighted around the scaffold—she saw the flames ascend, and the soldiers form a circle round them. She saw the victims leave the sledge; she looked upon him whom her heart loved as he mounted the place of death, and his step was firm, his countenance unmoved. She saw him join in prayer with his companions, and her eyes were fixed on him as he flung papers and his hat among the multitude. She saw the fatal signal given, and the drop fall—she heard the horrid shout, the yell that burst from the multitude, but not a muscle of her frame moved. She gazed calmly, as though it had been on a bridal ceremony. She beheld the executioner begin the barbarities which the law awards to treason—the clothes were torn from the victims—one by one they were cut down; and the finisher of the law, with the horrid knife in his hand, proceeded to lay open their bosoms, and taking out their hearts, flung them on the faggots that blazed around the scaffold. The last spectacle of barbarity was James Dawson; and when the executioner had plunged the knife in his breast, he raised his heart in his hand, and holding it a moment before the horror-stricken and disgusted multitude, he cast it into the flames, exclaiming, as he flung it from him—"God save King George!" Fanny beheld this—her eyes became blind—she heard not the shout of the multitude—she drew back her head into the coach—it dropped upon the shoulder of her companion—"My dear! I follow thee!—I follow thee!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands together—"sweet Jesus! receive both our souls together!" They attempted to raise her head, to support her in their arms, but she sank back lifeless—her spirit had accompanied him it loved—she died of stifled agony and a broken heart.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE LEVELLER.

How far the term, "A LEVELLER," is provincial, or confined to the Borders, I am not certain; for before I had left them, to become as a pilgrim on the earth, the phrase had fallen into disuse, and the events, or rather the cause which brought it into existence, had passed away. But, twenty-five or even twenty years ago, in these parts, there was no epithet more familiar to the lips of every schoolboy, than that of a *Leveller*. The juvenile lovers of mirth and mischief displayed their loyalty, by "*smeeking*" the houses, or burning the effigies of the Levellers; and he was a good subject, and a perfect gentleman, who, out of his liberality and patriotism, contributed a shilling to purchase powder to make the head of the effigy go off in a rocket, and its fingers start away in squibs. Levellers were persecuted by the young, and suspected by the old. Every town and village in the kingdom had its coterie of Levellers. They did not congregate together; for, as being suspected individuals, their so doing would have been attended with danger; but there was a sympathy, and a sort of brotherhood amongst those in the same place, and they met in twoes and threes, at the corners of the streets, in the fields, or the workshop, and not unfrequently at the operating rooms of the barber, as though there had been a secret understanding in the growth of their beards. Some of them were generally seen waiting the arrival of the mail, and running across the street, or the highway, as the case might be, eagerly inquiring of the guard—"What news?" But if, on the approach of the vehicle, they perceived it decorated with branches, or a flag displayed from it, away turned the Levellers from the unwelcome symbols of national rejoicing, and condoled one with another, in their own places of retirement. They were seldom, or never, found mongst rosy-faced country gentlemen, who walked in the midst of their fellow mortals, as if measuring their acres. Occasionally they might be found amongst tradesmen; but they were most frequently met with at the loom, or amongst those who had learned the art and mystery of a cordwainer. The Leveller, however, was generally a peaceful and a moral man, and always a man of much reading, and extensive information. Many looked upon the Leveller as the enemy of his country, and as wishing the destruction of its institutions: I always regarded them with a more favourable eye. Most of them I have met with were sincerely attached to liberty, though they frequently took strange methods of shewing it. They were opposed to the war with France, and they were enthusiastic admirers, almost worshippers, of Napoleon and his glories. They could describe the scene of all his victories—they could repeat his speeches and his bulletins by heart. But the old Jacobins of the last century, the Levellers of the beginning of this, are a race rapidly becoming extinct.

I shall give the history of one of them, who was called James Nicholson, and who resided in the village of T——. James was by trade a weaver—a walking history of the wars, and altogether one of the most remarkable men I ever met with He had an impressive and ready utterance; few could stand before him in an argument, and of him it might have been truly said—

"In reasoning, too, the parson owned his skill,
And, though defeated, he could argue still."

He possessed also a bold imagination, and a masculine understanding, and both had been improved by extensive reading. With such qualifications, it is not a matter of wonder that he was looked up to as the oracle, the head, or king, of the Levellers in T——, (if, indeed, they admitted the idea of a king.) For miles around, he was familiarly known by the designation of Jemmy the Leveller; for though there were others of the name of James who held similar sentiments in the village and neighbourhood, he was Jemmy par excellence. But in order that the reader may have a correct representation of James before him, I shall describe it as I saw him, about five-and-twenty years ago. He then appeared a man approaching to sixty years of age. His shoulders were rather bent, his height about five feet eleven, and he walked with his eyes fixed upon the ground. His arms were generally crossed upon his breast, and he stalked, with a long and slow step, like a shepherd toiling up a hill. His forehead was one that Spurzheim would have travelled a hundred miles to finger—it was both broad and lofty; his eyebrows were thick, of a deep brown colour, and met together; his eyes were large, and of a dark greyish hue; his nose appertained to the Roman; his mouth was rather large, and his hair was mixed with grey. His figure was spare and thin. He wore a very low-crowned, and a very broad-brimmed hat, a short brown coat, a dark striped waistcoat, with a double breast, corduroy breeches, which buckled at the knees, coarse blue stockings, and strong shoes, or rather brogues, neither of which articles had been new for at least three years; and around his body he wore a coarse, half-bleached apron, which was stained with blue, and hung loose before him. Such was James Nicholson, as he first appeared to me. For more than forty years, he had remained in a state of single blessedness; but whether this arose from his heart having continued insensible to the influence of woman's charms—from his never having met with one whom he thought he could safely take "for better, for worse"—or whether it arose from the maidens being afraid to risk their future happiness, by uniting themselves with such a strange and dangerous character as Jemmy the Jacobin, I cannot tell. It is certain, however, that he became convinced, that a bachelor's life was at best a *dowie* one; and there was another consideration that had considerable weight with him. He had nobody to "*fill his pirns*," or "*give in his webs*;" but he had to hire and pay people to do these things, and this made a great drawback on his earnings, particularly when the price of weaving became low. James, therefore, resolved to do as his father had done before him, and to take unto himself a wife. He cast his eyes abroad, and they rested on a decent spinster, who was beginning to be what is called a "*stayed lass*"—that is, very near approaching to the years, when the phrase, a "*stayed lass*," is about to be exchanged for that of an old maid. In a word, the object of his choice was but a very few years younger than himself. Her name was Peggy Purves, and it is possible she was inclined to adopt the language of the song, and say—

"O mother, ony body!"

for when James made his proposal, she smirked, and blushed—said she "didna ken what to say till't"—took the cor-

ners of her apron in her fingers—hung her head—smiled well-pleased, and added, she "would see!" but within three months became the wife of Jemmy the Leveller.

James became the father of two children, a son and daughter; and we may here notice a circumstance attending the baptism of the son. About three weeks after the birth of the child, his mother began to inquire—

"What shall we ca' him, James?—do ye think we should ca' him Alexander, after your faither and mine?"

"Haud yer tongue, woman," replied James, somewhat testily; "goodness me! where's the use in everlastingly yatter yattering about what I will ca' him? The bairn shall hae a name—a name that will be like a deed o' virtue and greatness engraven on his memory as often as he hears it."

"O James! James!" returned Peggy, "ye're the strangest and perversest man that ever I met wi' in my born days. I'm sure ye'll ne'er think o' gien ony o' yer heathenish Jacobin names to my bairn?"

"Just content yersel', Peggy," replied he, "just rest contented, if ye please—I'll gie the bairn a name that neither you nor him will ever hae cause to be ashamed o'."

Now, James was a rigid Dissenter, and caused the child to be taken to the meeting-house; and he stood up with it in his arms, in the midst of the congregation, that his infant might publicly receive baptism.

The minister inquired, in a low voice—"What is the child's name?"

His neighbours were anxious to hear the answer; and, in his deep, sonorous tones, he replied aloud—"GEORGE WASHINGTON!"

There was a sort of buzz and a movement throughout the congregation, and the minister himself looked surprised.

When her daughter was born, the choice of the name was left to Peggy, and she called her Catherine, in remembrance of her mother.

Shortly after the birth of his children, the French revolution began to lower in the political horizon, and James Nicholson, the weaver, with a fevered anxiety, watched its progress.

"It is a bursting forth o' the first seed o' the tree o' liberty, which the Americans planted and George Washington reared," cried James with enthusiasm; "the seeds o' that tree will spread owre the earth, as if scattered by the winds o' heaven—they will cover it as the waters do the sea—they will take root—they will spring up in every land; beneath the burning sun o' the West Indies, on the frozen deserts o' Siberia, the slave and the exile will rejoice beneath the shadow o' its branches, an' their hearts be gladdened by its fruits."

"Ay, man, James, that's noble!" exclaimed some brother Leveller, who retailed the sayings of the weaver at second hand—"Losh! if ye haena a head-piece that wad astonish a Privy Council!"

But, when the storm burst, and the sea of blood gushed forth like a deluge, when the innocent and the guilty were butchered together, James was staggered, his eyes became heavy, and his countenance fell. At length, he consoled his companions, saying—

"Weel, it's a pity—it's a great pity—it is bringing disgrace and guilt upon a glorious cause. But knives shouldna be put into the hands o' bairns till they ken how to use them. If the sun were to rise in a flash o' unclouded glory and dazzling brightness in a moment, succeeding the heavy darkness o' midnight, it wad be nae wonder if, for a time, we groped more blindly than we did in the dark! Or, if a blind man had his sight restored in a moment, and were set into the street, he would strike upon every object he met more readily, than he did when he was blind; for he had neither acquired the use o' his eyes, nor the idea o' distance. So is it wi' our neighbours in France: an instrument has been put into their hands before they ken how to use it—the sun o' liberty has burst upon them in an instant, without an intermediate dawn. They groaned under the tyranny o' blindness; but they hae acquired the power o' sight without being instructed in its use. But hae patience a little—the storm will gie place to sunshine, the troubled waters will subside into a calm, and liberty will fling her garment o' knowledge and mercy owre her now uninstructed worshippers."

"Weel! that's grand, James!—that's really famous!" said one of the coterie of Levellers to whom it was delivered; "odd! ye beat a'thing—ye're a match for *Wheatbread* himsel'."

"James," said another, "without meaning to flatter ye, if Billy Pitt had ye to gie him a dressing, I believe he wad offer ye a place the very next day, just to keep yer tongue quiet."

James was one of those who denounced, with all the vehemence and indignation of which he was capable, Britain's engaging in a war with France. He raised up his voice against it. He pronounced it to be an unjust and an impious attempt to support oppression, and to stifle freedom in its cradle.

"But in that freedom they will find a Hercules," cried he, "which, in its very cradle, will grip tyranny by the throat, an' a' the kings in Europe winna be able to slacken its grasp."

When the star of Napoleon began to rise, and broke forth with a lustre which dazzled the eyes of a wondering world, the Levellers of Britain, like the Republicans of France, lost sight of their love of liberty, in their admiration of the military glories and rapid triumphs of the hero. James Nicholson was one of those who became blinded with the fame, the splendid success, and the daring genius of the young Corsican. Napoleon became his idol. His deeds, his capacity, his fame, were his daily theme. They became the favourite subject of every Leveller. They neither saw in him one who laughed at liberty, and who made it his plaything, who regarded life as stubble, whose ambition circled the globe, and who was the enemy of Britain—they saw in him only a hero, who had burst from obscurity as a meteor from the darkness of night—whose glory had obscured the pomp of princes, and his word consumed their power.

The threatened invasion, and the *false alarm*, put the Leveller's admiration of Napoleon, and his love of his native land, to a severe trial; but we rejoice to say, for the sake of James Nicholson, that the latter triumphed, and he accompanied a party of volunteers ten miles along the coast, and remained an entire night, and the greater part of a day, under arms, and even he was then ready to say—

"Let foe come on foe, like wave upon wave,
We'll gie them a welcome, we'll gie them a grave."

But, as the apprehension of the invasion passed away, his admiration of Napoleon's triumphs, and his reverence for what he termed his stupendous genius, burned with redoubled force.

"Princes are as grasshoppers before him," said James; "nations are as spiders' webs. The Alps became as a highway before his spirit—he looked upon Italy, and the land was conquered."

I might describe to you the exultation and the rejoicings of James and his brethren, when they heard of the victories of Marengo, Ulm, and Austerlitz; and how, in their little parties of two and three, they walked a mile farther together in the fields, or by the sides of the Tweed, or peradventure indulged in an extra pint with one another, though most of them were temperate men; or, I might describe to you, how, upon such occasions, they would ask eagerly—"But what is *James* saying to it?" I, however, shall dwell only upon his conduct when he heard of the battle of Jena. He was standing with a brother Leveller at a corner of the village, when the mail arrived, which conveyed the important tidings. I think I see him now, as he appeared at that mo-

ment. Both were in expectation of momentous information—they ran to the side of the coach together. "What news?—what news?" they inquired of the guard at once. He stooped down, as they ran by the side of the coach, and informed them. The eyes of James glowed with delight—his nostrils were dilated.

"Oh! the great, the glorious man!" he exclaimed, rubbing his hands in ecstacy, and turning away from the coach; "the matchless!—the wonderful!—the great Napoleon!—there is none like him—there never was—he is a sun among the stars—they cannot twinkle in his presence."

He and his friends received a weekly paper amongst them—it was the day on which it arrived; they followed the coach to the post-office to receive it—and I need not tell you with what eagerness the contents of that paper were read. James was the reader; and after he had read an account of the battle, he gave his hearers a dissertation upon it.

He laid his head upon his pillow, with his thoughts filled with Napoleon and the battle of Jena; and when, on the following morning, he met two or three of his companions at the corner of the village, where they were wont to assemble for ten minutes after breakfast, to discuss the affairs of Europe, James, with a look of even more than his usual importance and sagacity, thus began:—

"I hae dreamed a marvellous dream. I saw the battle o' Jena—I beheld the Prussians fly with dismay before the voice of the conqueror. Then did I see the great man, arrayed in his robes of victory, bearing the sword of power in his hand, ascend a throne of gold and of ivory. Over the throne was a gorgeous canopy of purple, and diamonds bespangled the tapestry as a firmament. The crowns of Europe lay before him, and kings, and princes, and nobles, kneeled at his feet. At his nod, he made kings and exalted nations. Armies fled and advanced at the moving of his finger—they were machines in his hand. The spirits of Alexander and of Cæsar—all the heroes of antiquity—gazed in wonder upon his throne; each was surrounded by the halo of his victories and the fame of ages; but their haloes became dim before the flash o' his sword of power, and the embodiment of their spirits became as a pale mist before the majesty of his eyes, and the magnificence of his triumphs. The nations of the earth were also gathered around the throne, and as with one voice, in the same language, and at the same moment, they waved their hands, and cried, as peals of thunder mingle wi' each other—'Long live the great Emperor!' But, while my soul started within me at the mighty shout, and my eyes gazed with wonder and astonishment on the glory and the power of the great man, darkness fell upon the throne, troubled waters dashed around it, and the vision of night and vastness—the Emperor, the kneeling kings, the armies, and the people, were encompassed in the dark waves—swallowed as though they had not been; and, with the cold perspiration standing on my forehead, I awoke, and found that I had dreamed."*

"It is a singular dream," said one.

"Sleeping or waking, James is the same man," said another, "aye out o' the common run. You and me wad hae sleeped a twelvemonth before we had dreamed the like o' that."

But one circumstance arose which troubled James much, and which all his admiration, yea, all his worship of Napoleon could not wholly overcome. James, as we have hinted, was a rigid Presbyterian, and the idea of a man putting away his wife, he could not forgive. When, therefore, Napoleon divorced the gentle Josephine, and took the daughter of Austria to his bed—

"He hath done wrong," said James; "he has erred grievously. He has been an instrument in humbling the Pope, the instrument foretold in the Revelation; and he has been the glorious means o' levelling and destroying the Inquisition—but this sin o' putting away his wife, and pretending to marry another, casts a blot upon a' his glories; and I fear that humiliation, as a punishment, will follow the foul sin. Yet, after a', as a man, he was subject to temptation; and, as being no common man, we maunna judge his conduct by common rules."

"Really, James," said the individual he addressed, "wi a' my admiration o' the great man,* and my respect for you, I'm no just clear upon your last remark—when the Scriptures forbade a man to put away his wife there was nae exception made for kings or emperors."

"True," said James—"but"———

James never finished his "but." His conscience told him that his idol had sinned; and when the disastrous campaign to Russia shortly after followed, he imagined that he beheld in its terrible calamities the punishment he had predicted. The sun of Napoleon had reached its meridian, the fires of Moscow raised a cloud before it, behind which it hastened to its setting. In the events of that memorable invasion and retreat, James Nicholson took an eager and mournful interest. Thoughts of it haunted him in his sleep; and he would dream of Russian deserts which presented to the eye an unbounded waste of snow; or start, exclaiming, "The Cossacks!—the Cossacks!" His temper, too, became irritable, and his family found it hard to bear with it.

This, however, was not the only cause which increased the irritability, and provoked the indignation, of James the Leveller; for, as the glory of Napoleon began to wane, and the arms of the British achieved new victories in the Peninsula, he and his brethren in principle became the objects of almost nightly persecution. Never did the mail arrive, bearing tidings of the success of the British or their allies, but as surely was a figure, intended to represent one or other of the Levellers, paraded through the village, and burned before the door of the offender, amidst the shouts, the groans, and laughter, of some two or three hundred boys and young men. The reader may be surprised to hear that one of the principal leaders of these young and mischief-loving loyalists was no other than George Washington, the only son of our friend, James Nicholson. To turn him from conduct, and the manifestation of a principle, so unworthy of his name, James spared neither admonition, reproof, nor the rod of correction. But George was now too old for his father to apply the latter, and his advice and reproof in this matter was like throwing water in the sea. The namesake of the great President never took a part in such exhibitions of his father, and in holding his principles up to execration and contempt; on the contrary, he did all in his power to prevent them, and repeatedly did he prevent them—but he entered, with his whole heart, into every proposal to make a mock spectacle of others. The young tormentors knew little or nothing of the principles of the men they delighted to persecute—it was enough for them to know that they were *Levellers*, that *they wished the French to win;* and although James Nicholson was known to be, as I have already said, the very king and oracle of the levelling party in the neighbourhood, yet, for his son's sake, he frequently escaped the persecution intended for him, and it was visited upon the heads of more insignificant characters.

One evening, James beheld his son heading the noisy band in a crusade against the peace of a particular friend; moreover, George bore a long pole over his shoulder, to the top of which an intended resemblance of his father's friend was attached. James further saw his hopeful son and the

* Many in this neighbourhood, who read the Leveller's dream, will remember the original. Twenty years ago, I heard it related by the dreamer, with all the enthusiasm of a stanch admirer of Napoleon, and I have preserved his words and imagery as closely as I could recollect them.

* I have often remarked that the admirers of Napoleon were wont to speak of him as *the great man.*

crowd reach his friend's house, he beheld him scale the walls, (which were but a single story in height,) he saw him stand upon the roof—the pole, with the effigy attached to it, was again handed to him, and, amidst the shouts of his companions, he put the pole down the chimney, leaving the figure as a smoke-doctor on its top.

James could endure no more. "Oh, the villain!—the scoundrel!" he cried—"the—the"——but he could add no more, from excess of indignation. He rushed along the street—he dashed through the crowd—he grasped his son by the throat, at the moment of his springing from the roof. He shook with rage. He struck him violently. He raised his feet and kicked him.

"What is a' this for?" said George, sullenly, while he suffered even more from shame than his father's violence.

"What is it for!" cried James, half choked with passion; "ye rascal!—ye disgrace!—ye profligate!—how can ye ask what is it for?" and he struck him again.

"Faither," said George, more sullenly than before, "I wad advise ye to keep yer hands to yersel'—at least on the street and before folk."

"Awa wi' ye! ye reprobate!" exclaimed the old man, "and never enter my door again—never while ye breathe—ye thankless!"——

"Be it sae," said George.

James returned to his house, in sorrow and in anger. He was out of humour with everything. He found fault with his daughter—he spoke angrily to his wife. Chairs, stools, tables, and crockery, he kicked to the right and left. He flung his supper behind the fire when it was set before him. He was grieved at his son's conduct; but he was also angry with himself for his violence towards him.

A sergeant of a Highland regiment had been for some time in the village, on the recruiting service. He was to leave with his recruits, and proceed to Leith, where they were immediately to embark on the following morning. Amongst the recruits, were many of the acquaintances of George and his companions. After the affair of the effigy, they went to have a parting glass with them. George was then about nineteen. He had not yet forgiven his father for the indignity he had openly offered to him—he remembered he had forbidden him his house. One of his companions jestingly alluded to the indignation of the old man—he "wondered how George stood it." The remark made his feelings more bitter. He felt shame upon his face. Another of his companions enlisted; in the excitement of the moment, George followed his example, and, before sunrise on the following morning, was on his road to Leith with the other recruits.

Old James arose and went to his loom, unhappy and troubled in his spirit. He longed for a reconciliation with his son—to tell him he was sorry for the length to which his temper had led him, and also calmly to reason with him on the folly, the unreasonableness, and the wickedness, of his own conduct, in running with a crowd at his heels about the street, persecuting honest men, and endangering both the peace of the town and the safety of property. But he had been an hour at the loom, and George took not his place at his (for he had brought him up to his own trade); another hour passed and breakfast time arrived, but the shuttle which had been driven by the hand of his son, sent forth no sound.

"Where is George?" inquired he, as he entered the house; "wherefore has he no been ben at his wark?"

"Ye ken best," returned Peggy, who thought it her time to be out of humour, "for it lies between ye; but ye'll carry on yer rampaging fits o' passion till ye drive baith the bairns an' me frae 'bout the house. Ye may seek for George whar ye saw him last; but there is his bed, untouched, as I made it yesterday morning, and ye see what ye've made o' yer handy-wark."

"Oh, haud yer tongue, ye wicked woman, ye," said James, "for it wad clip clouts. Had Job been afflicted wi' yer tongue, he wad needed nae other trial!"

"My tongue!" retorted she; "ay, gude truly! but if ony woman but mysel' had to put up wi' yer temper, they wad ken what it is to be tried."

"Puir woman! ye dinna ken yer born!" replied James; and, turning to his daughter, added, "rin awa out, Katie, an' see if yer brother is wi' ony o' his acquaintances—he'll hae been sleeping wi' some o' them. Tell him to come hame to his breakfast."

She left the house, and returned in about ten minutes, weeping, sobbing, wringing her hands, and exclaiming—

"George is listed and awa!—he's listed and awa!—O my poor George!"

"Listed!" exclaimed James; and he fell back against the wall, as though a bullet had entered his bosom.

"Listed! my bairn—my darling bairn listed!" cried Peggy; "O James! James!—ye cruel man! see what ye've done—ye hae driven my bairn to destruction!"

"Woman! woman!" added he, "dinna torment me beyond what I am able to endure; do ye no think I am suffering enough, and mair than enough, without you aggravating my misery? Oh! the rash, the thoughtless callant! Could he no forgie his faither for ae fault?—a faither that could lay down his life for him. Haste ye, Katie, get me my stick and my Sunday coat, and I'll follow him—he canna be far yet—I'll bring him back. Wheesht now, Peggy," he added, "let us hae nae mair reflections—just compose yersel'—George shall be hame the night, and we'll let byganes be byganes."

"Oh, then, James, rin every foot," said Peggy, whose ill-humour had yielded to her maternal anxiety; "bring him back whether he will or no; tell him how ill Katie is, and that if he persists in being a sodger, he will be the death o' his mother."

With a heavy and an anxious heart, James set out in pursuit of his son; but the sergeant and his recruits had taken the road six hours before him. On arriving at Dunbar, where he expected they would halt for the night, he was informed, that the sergeant, being ordered to push forward to Leith with all possible expedition, as the vessel in which they were to embark was to sail with the morning tide, had, with his recruits, taken one of the coaches, and would then be within a few miles of Edinburgh. This was another blow to James. But after resting for a space, not exceeding five minutes, he hastened forward to Leith.

It was midnight when he arrived, and he could learn nothing of his son, or the vessel in which he was to embark; but, weary as he was, he wandered along the shore and the pier till morning. Day began to break—the shores of the Firth became dimly visible; the Bass, like a fixed cloud, appeared on the distant horizon; it was more than half-tide, and, as he stood upon the pier, he heard the *yo-heave-o!* of seamen, proceeding from a smack which lay on the south side of the harbour, by the lowest bridge. He hastened towards the vessel—but, before he approached it, and while the cry of the seamen yet continued, a party of soldiers and recruits issued from a tavern on the shore. They tossed their caps in the air, they huzzaed, and proceeded towards the smack. With a throbbing heart, James hurried forward, and in the midst of them, through the grey light, he beheld his son.

"O George!" cried the anxious parent, "what a journey ye hae gien yer faither!"

George started at his father's voice, and for a moment he was silent and sullen, as though he had not yet forgiven him

"Come, George," said the old man, affectionately, "let us forget and forgie—come awa hame again, my man, an I'll pay the *smart* money. Dinna persist in bringing yer mother to her grave—in breaking yer sister's heart, puir thing, and in making me miserable."

"O faither! faither!" groaned George, grasping his father's hand, "its owre late—its owre late now! What's done canna be undone!"

"Why for no, bairn?" cried James; "an how is it owre late? The ship's no sailed, and I've the smart-money in my pocket."

"But I've ta'en the bounty, faither—I'm sworn in!" replied the son.

"Sworn in!" exclaimed the unhappy father, "Oh mercy me! what's this o't! My happiness is destroyed for ever. O George! George, man! what is this that ye've done? How shall I meet yer poor wretched mother without ye?"

George laid his head upon his father's shoulder and wrung his hand. He was beginning to experience what hours, what years of misery may proceed from the want of a minute's calm reflection. The thought of buying him off could not be entertained. The vessel was to sail within an hour—men were needed; but even had no other obstacles attended the taking of such a step, there was one that was insurmountable—James Nicholson had never in his life been possessed of half the sum necessary to accomplish it, nor could he have raised it by the sale of his entire goods and chattels; and his nature forbade him to solicit a loan from others, even to redeem a son.

They were beginning to haul off the vessel; and poor George, who now felt all the bitterness of remorse, added to the anguish of parting from a parent, thrust his hand into his pocket, and, as he bade him farewell, attempted to put his bounty-money in his father's hand. The old man sprung back, as if a poisonous snake had touched him. The principles of the Leveller rose superior to the feelings of the father.

"George!" he cried, "George! can my ain son insult me, an' in a moment like this? Me tak yere blood-money!—me!—me! Ye dinna ken yer faither! Before I wad touch money gotten in such a cause, I wad starve by a dyke-side. Fling it into the sea, George!—fling it into the sea!—that's the only favour ye can confer upon yer faither." But, again, the parent gained the ascendency in his heart, and he added—"But, poor chield, ye meant it kindly. Fareweel, then, my man!—Oh, fareweel, George! Heaven be wi' my misguided bairn! Oh! what shall I say to yer poor mother? Fareweel, lad!—fareweel!"

The vessel was pulled off—and thus parted the father and his son. I shall not describe the feelings of James on his solitary journey homewards, nor dwell upon the grief of his wife and daughter, when they beheld that he returned alone, and that George "was not."

It was about two years after his son had enlisted, that the news of the peace and the abdication of Napoleon arrived. James was not one of those who partook of the general joy; but while he mourned over the fall of the man whom he had all but worshipped, he denounced the conduct of the allied sovereigns in strong and bitter terms of indignation. The bellman went round the village, calling upon the inhabitants to demonstrate their rejoicing by an illumination. The Levellers consulted James upon the subject, and his advice was, that they ought not, let the consequences be what they would, comply with the request or command of the authorities, and which had been proclaimed by the town-crier; on the contrary, he recommended, that at the hour when the illumination was to commence, every man of them should extinguish the fires in his house, and leave not a lamp or a rushlight burning. His advice was always akin to a command, and it was implicitly followed. The houses were lighted up—the illumination was general, save only the windows of the Levellers, which appeared as in mourning; and soon attracted the attention of the crowd, the most unruly mongst whom raised the cry of "Smash them!—send them" and the cry was no sooner made than it was obeyed; ones flew thick as hail panes were shivered, sashes broken and they ran from one house to another carrying on their work of destruction. In its turn, they came to the dwelling of James—they raised a yell before it—a stone was thrown, and the crash of broken glass was heard. James opened the door, and stood before them. They yelled louder.

"Break away!" said he, contemptuously; "ye puir infatuated sauls that ye are—break away, an' dinna leave a hale pane, if it's yer sovereign will an' pleasure! Ye silly, thoughtless, senseless idiots; how mony hunder millions has it cost this country to cram the precious Bourbons on the people o' France again?—an' wha's to pay it, think ye?"

"No you, Jemmy," cried a voice from the crowd.

"But I maun toil frae mornin' till night to help to do it ye blockhead ye," answered James; "an' ye hae to do the same, an' yer back has to gang bare, an' yer bairns to be hungered for it! Certes, friends, ye hae great cause for an illumination! But, as if the hunders o' millions which yer assistance o' the Bourbons has added to the national debt were but a trifle, ye, forsooth, must increase yer county burdens by breaking decent people's windows, for their sake, out o' pure mischief. Break awa, friends, if it's yer pleasure, the damage winna come out o' my pocket; and if yer siller is sae plentifu' that ye can afford to throw it awa in chucky-stanes!—fling! fling!" and, withdrawing into the house, he shut the door.

"Odd! I dinna ken," said one of the crowd, "but there's a deal o' truth in what he says."

"It was too bad to touch his windows," said another; "his son, George, has been in the wars, an' the life o' a son is o' mair value than a pound o' candles."

"Ye're richt," cried a third.

"Hurra for Jemmy the Leveller!" cried another. The crowd gave a loud cheer, and left the house in good humour; nor was there another window in the village broken throughout the night.

Next day, James received the following letter from his son. It was dated

Toulouse, April 14th, 1814.

"Honoured Father and Mother—I hope this will find you and my dear sister well, as it leaves me, thank Providence for it. I think this war will soon be over now; for, whatever you may think of the French and their fighting, father, we have driven them from pillar to post, and from post to pillar, as the saying is. Not but that they are brave fellows, and clever fellows too; but we can beat them, and that is everything. Soult is one of their best generals, if not their very best; and though he was in his own country, and had his positions all of his own choosing, I assure you, upon the word of a soldier, that we have beaten him out and out, twice within this fortnight; but, if you still get the newspaper, you will have seen something about it. You must not expect me to give you any very particular accounts about what has taken place; for a single soldier just sees and knows as much about a battle as the spoke of a mill-wheel knows about the corn which it causes to be ground. I may here, also, while I remember, tell you what my notions of bravery are. Some people talk about courageous men, and braving death, and this and that; but, so far as I have seen and felt, it is all talk—nothing but talk. There are very few such cowards as to run away, or not to do their duty, (indeed to run away from the ranks during an action would be no easy matter,) but I believe I am no coward—I daresay you think the same thing; and the best man in all T—— durst not call me one: but I will tell you how I felt when I first entered a battle. We were under arms—I saw a part of the enemy's lines before us—we were ordered to advance—I knew that in ten minutes the work of death would begin, and I felt—not faintish, but some way confoundedly like it. The first firing commenced by the advanced wing; at the report, my knees shook, (not visibly,) and my heart leaped within me. A cold sweat (a slight one) broke over me. I

remember the sensation. A second discharge took place—the work was at hand—something seemed to *crack* within my ears. I felt I don't know how; but it was not courageous, though, as to running away or being beaten, the thought never entered my head. Only I did not feel like what you read about *heroes*. Well, the word '*Fire*' was given to our own regiment. The drum of my ear actually felt as if it were split. My heart gave one terrible bound, and I felt it no more. For a few moments all was ringing of the ears, smoke, and confusion. I forgot everything about death. The roar of the action had become general—through its din I at intervals heard the sounds of the drum and the fife. But my ears instantly became, as it were, '*cased*.' I could hear nothing but the word of command, save a hum, hum, something like a swarm of bees about to settle round my head. I saw nothing, and I just loaded as I was ordered, and fired—fired—fired!—as insensible, for all the world, as if I had been on a parade. Two or three of my neighbours were shot to the right and left; but the ranks were filled up in a twinkling, and it was not every time that I observed whether they were killed or wounded. But, as I say, after the third firing or so, I hardly knew whether I was dead or living; I acted in a kind of way mechanically, as it were, through a sort of dumfoundered desperation, or anything else ye like to call it; and if this be courage, it's not the sort of courage that I've heard and read about—but it's the only kind of courage I felt on entering on my first engagement, and, as I have said, there are none that would dare to call me *coward!* But, as I was telling ye, we have twice completely beaten Soult within these fourteen days. We have driven them out of Spain; and, but for the bad winter weather, we would have driven them through France before now. But we have driven them into France; and, as I said, even in their own country, we have beaten them twice. Soult had his army all drawn up and ready, upon a rising ground, before a town they call Orthies. I have no doubt but ye have some idea of what sort of winter it has been, and that may lead you to judge of what sort of roads we have had to wade through in a country like this; and that we've come from where nobody ever had to complain of being imprisoned for the destroying of toll-bars! I think that was the most foolish and diabolical action ever any person in our country was guilty of. But, besides the state of the roads, we had three rivers to cross before we could reach the French. However, we did cross them. General Picton, with the third division of the army, crossed or forded what they call the *Gave de Pau* on the 26th of last month, and we got over the river on the following day. Our army completed their positions early in the afternoon, and Lord Wellington (for he is a prompt man) immediately began to give Soult notice that he must seek different quarters for the night. Well, the action began, and a dreadful and sanguinary battle it was. Our third division suffered terribly. But we drove the French from their heights—we routed them. We thus obtained possession of the navigation of the Adour, one of the principal commercial passages in France; and Soult found there was nothing left but to retreat, as he best might, to Toulouse, (from whence I write this letter,) and there we followed him; and from here, too, though after hard fighting, we forced him to run for it. You may say what you like, father, but Lord Wellington is a first-rate general—though none of us over-and-above like him, for he is terribly severe; he is a disciplinarian, soul and body of him, and a rigid one. We have beaten all Buonaparte's generals; and I should like to meet with him, just to see if we can beat him too. You used to talk so much about him, that if I live to get to Paris, I shall see him, though I give a shilling for it. What I mean by that is, that I think the game is up with him; and four or five Irish soldiers, of my acquaintance, have thought it an excellent speculation to club together, and to offer the Emperor Alexander and the rest of them (who, I dare say will be very glad to get rid of him on cheap terms,) a price for him, and to bring him over to Britain, and exhibit him round the country, at so much a-head"———

"O depravity!—depravity!" cried James, rising in a fury, and flinging the letter from him—"Oh, that a bairn o' mine should be capable o' pennin' sic disgracfu' language!"

He would allow no more of the letter to be read—he said his son had turned a mere reprobate; he would never own him more.

A few weeks after this, Catherine, the daughter of our old Leveller, was married to a young weaver, named William Crawford, who then wrought in the neighbourhood of Stirling. He was a man according to James' own heart; for he had wrought in the same shop with him, and, when a boy, received his principles from him. James, therefore, rejoiced in his daughter's marriage; and he said "there was ane o' his family—which wasna large—that hadna disgraced him." Yet he took the abdication and the exile of Napoleon to heart grievously. Many said that, if he could have raised the money, he would have gone to Elba to condole with the exiled Emperor, though he should have begged for the remainder of his days. He went about mourning for his fate; but, as the proverb says, they who mourn for trifles or strangers may soon have more to mourn for—and so it was with James Nicholson. His son was abroad—his daughter had left his house, and removed to another part of the country—and his wife fell sick and died. He felt all the solitariness of being left alone—he became fretful and unhappy. He said, that now he "hadna ane to do onything for him." His health also began to fail, and to him peace brought neither plenty nor prosperity. The weaving trade grew worse and worse every day. James said he believed that prices would come to nothing. He gradually became less able to work, and his earnings were less and less. He was evidently drooping fast. But the news arrived that Napoleon had left Elba—that he had landed in France—that he was on his way to Paris—that he had entered it—that the Bourbons had fled; and the eyes of James again sparkled with joy, and he went about rubbing his hands, and again exclaiming—"Oh, the great—the godlike man!—the beloved of the people!—the conqueror of hearts as well as countries! he is returned!—he is returned! Everything will go well again!"

During "the hundred days," James forgot all his sorrow and all his solitariness; like the eagle, he seemed to have renewed his youth. But the tidings of Waterloo arrived.

"Treachery! foul treachery!" cried the old man, when he heard them; and he smote his hand upon his breast. But he remembered that his son was in that battle. He had not heard from him—he knew not but that he was numbered with the slain—he feared it, and he became tenfold more unhappy and miserable than before.

A few months after the battle, a wounded soldier arrived at T——, to recruit his health amongst his friends. He had enlisted with George, he had served in the same regiment, and seen him fall at the moment the cry of "The Prussians!" was raised.

"My son!—my poor son!" cried the miserable father, "and it is my doing—it is a' mine—I drove him to list; and how can I live wi' the murder o' my poor George upon my head?" His distress became deeper and more deep; his health and strength more rapidly declined; he was unable to work, and he began to be in want. About this period, also, he was attacked with a paralytic stroke, which deprived him of the use of his right arm; and he was reluctantly compelled to remove to Stirlingshire, and become an inmate in the house of his daughter.

It was a sad grief to his proud spirit to feel himself a burden upon his child; but she and her husband strove anxiously to soothe him, and to render him happy. He was still residing with them when the Radical meetings took place in various parts of the country, and especially in the west of

cotland, in 1819. James contemplated them with delight. He said the spirit of liberty was casting its face upon his countrymen—they were beginning to think like men, and to understand the principles which he had gloried in, through good report and through bad report—yea, and through persecution, for more than half a century.

A meeting was to take place near Stirling, and James was sorrowful that he was unable to attend; but his son-in-law was to be present, and James charged him, that he would bring him a faithful account of all the proceedings. Catherine knew little about the principles of her father, or her husband, or the object of the meeting. She asked if it would make wages any higher; but she had heard that the military would be called out to disperse it—that government would punish those who attended it, and her fears were excited.

"Tak my advice, Willie," said she to her husband, as he went towards the door, "tak a wife's advice for ance, and dinna gang near it. There will nae gude come out o't. Ye can mak naething by it; but will lose baith time and money; and I understand that it is likely great danger will attend it, and ye may be brought into trouble. Sae, dinna gang, Willie, like a guid lad—if ye hae ony regard for me, dinna gang."

"Really, Katie," said Willie, who was a good-natured man, "ye talk very silly; but ye're just like a' the women, hinny—their outcry is aye about expense and danger. But dinna ye trouble yoursel'— it's o' nae use to be put about for the death ye'll ne'er die. I'll be hame to my four-hours."

"The lassie's silly," said her father, "wherefore should he no gang?—It is the duty o' every man to gang that is able; and sorry am I that I am not, or I wad hae rejoiced to hae stood forth this day, as a champion, in the great cause o' liberty."

So, William Crawford, disregarding the remonstrances of his wife, went to the meeting. But while the people were yet assembling, the military were called out—the riot act was read—and the soldiers fired at or over the multitude. Instant confusion took place—there was a running to and fro, and the soldiers pursued. Several were wounded, and some seriously.

The news that the meeting had been dispersed, and that several were wounded, were brought to James Nicholson and his daughter as they sat waiting the return of her husband.

"Oh! I trust in goodness, that naething has happened to William!" she exclaimed. "But what can be stopping him? Oh! had he but ta'en my advice—had ye no persuaded him, faither; but ye was waur than him."

James made no reply. A gloomy apprehension, that "something had happened," was stealing over his mind. He took his staff, and walked forward, as far as he was able, upon the road; but, after waiting for two hours, and after fruitless inquiries at every one he met, he returned, having heard nothing of his son-in-law. His daughter, with three children around her, sat weeping before the fire. He endeavoured to comfort her, and to inspire her with hopes which he did not himself feel, and to banish fears from her breast which he himself entertained. Night set in, and, with its darkness, their fears and their anxiety increased. The children wept more bitterly as the distress of their mother became stronger—they raised their little hands, they pulled her gown, and they called for their father. A cart stopped at the door, and William Crawford, with his arm bound up, was carried into his house by strangers. Catherine screamed when she beheld him, and the children cried wildly. Old James met them at the door, and said, "O William!"

He had been found by the side of a hedge, fainting from loss of blood. A bullet had entered his arm below the shoulder—the bone was splintered—and, on a surgeon's being sent for, he declared that immediate amputation was necessary. Poor Catherine and her little ones were taken into the house of a neighbour while the operation was to be performed, and even her father had not nerve to look on it. William sat calmly, and beheld the surgeon and his assistant make their preparations, and when the former took the knife in his hand, the wounded man thought not of bodily pain, but the feelings of the father and the husband gushed forth.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "had it been my leg, it wad hae been nathing; but my arm—I will be helpless for life. What am I to do now for my poor Katie and my bits o' bairns? Guid gracious! I canna beg!—and auld James, poor body, what will come owre him? O, Sir!" added he, addressing the surgeon, "I could bear to hae my arm cut through in twenty different places, were it not that it deprives me o' the power o' working for bread for my family."

"Keep a stout heart, my good fellow," said the surgeon, as he began his task; "they will be provided for in some way."

"Grant it may be sae!" answered William; "but I see naething for us but to beg."

I must here, however take back my reader to 1815, and, from the neighbourhood of Stirling direct their attention to Brussels and Waterloo. George Washington Nicholson, after the battle of Toulouse, had been appointed to the rank of Sergeant. For several months he was an inmate in the house of a thriving merchant in Brussels; he had assisted him in his business; he, in fact, acted as his chief clerk and his confident; he became as one of the family, and nothing was done by the Belgian trader without consulting Sergeant Nicholson.

But the fearful night of the 15th of June arrived, when the sounds of the pibroch rang through the streets of Brussels, startling soldier and citizen, and the raven and the owl were invited to a feast. The name of Napoleon was pronounced by tongues of every nation. "He comes!—he comes!" was the cry. George Nicholson was one of the first to array himself for battle, and rush forth to join his regiment. He bade a hurried farewell to his host; but there was one in the house whose hand trembled when he touched it, and on whose lips he passionately breathed his abrupt adieu. It was the gentle Louise, the sole daughter of his host.

The three following days were dreadful days in Brussels. confusion, anxiety, dismay, prevailed in every street; they were pictured in every countenence. On one hand were crowded the wounded from the battle, on the other were citizens flying from the town to save their goods and themselves, and, in their general eagerness to escape, blocking up their flight. Shops were shut, houses deserted, and churches turned into hospitals. But, in the midst of all—every hour, and more frequently—there went a messenger from the house of the merchant with whom Sergeant Nicholson had lodged, to the *Porte de Namur*, to inquire how fared it with the Highlanders, to examine the caravans with the wounded as they arrived, and to inquire at the hospitals if *one whom Louise named*, had been brought there.

Never was a Sabbath spent in a more unchristian manner than that of the 18th June 1815, on the plains of Waterloo. At night the news of the success of the British arrived in Brussels, and before sunrise on the following morning the merchant in whose house George Nicholson had been lodged, drove through the *Porte de Namur*, with his daughter Louise by his side. At every step of their journey appalling spectacles presented themselves before them; and, as they proceeded, they became more and more horrible. They were compelled to quit their vehicle, for the roads were blocked up, and proceeded through the forest *de Soignes*, into which many of the wounded had crawled to die, or to escape being trampled on by the pain-maddened horses. On emerging from the forest, the disgusting shambles of war, with its human carcasses, its blood, its wounded, and its dying, spread all its horrors before them. From the late rains, the field was as a morass. Conquerors, and the conquered, were covered with mud. Here lay heaps of dead—there, soldier

and citizen dug pits to bury them in crowds, and they were hurled into a common grave,

"Unknelled, uncoffined, and unknown."

Let the eyes turn where they would, there the ghastly sight of the wounded met them; nor could the ear be rendered deaf to the groans of the dying, and the cry from every quarter, and in every tongue, of—"Water!—water!"—for the wounded were perishing from thirst, and their throats were parched, and their tongues dry. There, too, prowled the plunderer, robbing the dead—the new-made widow sought her husband, and the mother her son. To and fro rushed hundreds of war-horses, in foam, and in agony, without curb or rider—others lay kicking and snorting on the ground, their broad chests heaving with the throes of departing life, and struggling as though they thought themselves stronger than death.

Louise and her father were shewn to the positions that had been occupied by the Highland regiments. They inquired of every one whom they met, and who wore the garb of old Scotland, if they could tell them aught of the fate of Serjeant Nicholson; but they shook their heads, and answered, "No."

Louise was a beautiful and interesting girl, and the bloom of nineteen summers blushed on her cheeks; but they were now pale, and her dark eyes were bedimmed with tears. She leaned upon her father's arm, and they were passing near a field of rye, which was trodden down as though a scythe had been passed over it. Many dead and dying Highlanders lay near it. Before them lay a wounded man, whose face was covered, and disfigured with blood—he was gasping for water, and his glazed eyes were unconcious of the earnestness and affection with which they gazed on him.

"It is he!—it is he!" cried Louise.

It was indeed George Nicholson.

"He lives!—he breathes!" she continued. She bent over him—she raised his head—she applied a cordial to his lips. He swallowed it eagerly. His eyes began to move—a glow of consciousness kindled in them. With the assistance of her father, she washed, and bound up his wounds, and the latter having procured a litter, he had him conveyed to his house at Brussels, and they accompanied him by the way. Louise watched over him; and, in a few days, his wounds were pronounced to be no longer dangerous, though he recovered slowly, and he acknowledged the affection of his gentle deliverer with the tears of gratitude, and the glance of love.

As soon as he had acquired strength to use a pen, he wrote a letter to his father, but he received no answer—a second time he wrote, and the result was the same. He now believed, that, because he had been an humble instrument in contributing to the fall of a man, in whose greatness his father's soul was wrapt up, he had cast him off, and disowned him.

The father of Louise obtained his discharge, and entrusted him with the management of his business. He knew that his daughter's heart was attached, with all a woman's devotedness, to the young Scotchman, and he knew that his affection for her was not less ardent. He knew also his worth; he had profited by his integrity and activity in business; and when the next anniversary of Waterloo came, he bade them be happy, and their hands were united.

There was now but one cloud which threw a shade over the felicity of George Nicholson, and that was, that he had never heard from his parents, and that his father would not acknowledge his letters; yet he suspected not the cause. Almost six years had passed since he became the husband of Louise, yet his heart yearned after the place of his birth, and in the dreams of the night his spirit revisited it. He longed once more to hear his mother's voice, to grasp his father's hand, to receive a sister's welcome. But, more than these, he was now rich, and he wished to remove them from penury, to crown their declining years with ease and with plenty—nor could a son entertain a more honourable ambition, or more one meriting the blessing of Heaven.

Taking Louise with him, they sailed from Antwerp, and in a few days arrived in London, from thence they proceeded towards the Borders, and the place of his birth. They had reached Alnwick, where they intended to remain for a few hours, and they went out to visit the castle. They had entered the square in front of the proud palace of the Percys, and, in the midst of the square, they observed a one-handed flute-player, with a young wife, and three ragged children, by his side, and the poor woman was soliciting alms for her husband's music.

The heart of Louise was touched; she had drawn out her purse, and the wife of the flute-player, with her children in her hand, modestly, and without speaking, curtsied before her.

George shook—he started—he raised his hands—

"Catherine!—my sister!—my own sister!" he exclaimed, grasping the hand of the supplicant.

"O George!—my brother!" cried Catherine, and wept.

The flute-player looked around. The instrument fell from his hand.

"What!—William!—and without an arm, too!" added George, extending his hand to the musician.

Louise took the hand of her new found sister, and smiled, and wept, and bent down, and kissed the cheeks of her children.

"My father—my mother, Catherine?" inquired George, in a tone that told how he trembled to ask the question.

She informed him of their mother's death, of their father's infirmities, and that he was then an out-door pauper in T——.

He relieved his sister's wants, and, with Louise, hastened to his birth-place. He found his father almost bed-ridden—a boarder at half-a-crown a-week, in a miserable hovel, the occupants of which were as poor as their parish lodger. Old James was sitting reading a newspaper, which he had borrowed, when they entered; for his ruling passion remained strong in the midst of his age and infirmities. The rays of the setting sun were falling on his grey hairs. Tears had gathered in the eyes of his son, and he inquired—

"Do you know me?"

James suddenly raised his eyes—they flashed with eager joy—he dropped the paper—

"Ken ye! ken ye!—my son! my son!—my lost George!" and he sank on his son's bosom.

When the first burst of joy had subsided—

"And wha is this sweet leddy?" inquired James, gazing fondly at Louise.

"Your daughter," replied George, placing her hand in his.

I need not further dwell upon the history of the Leveller. From that hour he ceased to be a pauper—he accompanied his son to Brussels, and spent the remainder of his days in peace, and amidst many of the scenes which he had long before read of with enthusiasm.

But, some reader may ask, what became of poor Catherine and her flute-player? A linen-draper's shop was taken and stocked for them by her brother, and in it Prosperity became a constant customer. Such is the history of James Nicholson, the Leveller, and his children.



THE LEVELLER.

WILSON'S
Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative
TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE BRIDE.

Fifty years ago, William Percy rented a farm that consisted of about a hundred acres, and which was situated on the banks of the Till. His wife, though not remarkable for her management of a farm house, was woman of many virtues, and possessed of a kind and affectionate heart. They had an only daughter, whose name was Agnes; and, as she approached towards womanhood, people began to designate her *The Rose of Till-side.* Her beauty was not of the kind that dazzles or excites sudden admiration; but it grew upon the sight like the increasing brightness of a young rainbow—its influence stole over the soul as moonlight on the waters. It was pleasant to look upon her fair countenance, where sweetness gave a character to beauty, mellowing it and softening it, as though the soul of innocence there reflected its image. Many said that no one could look upon the face of Agnes Percy and sin. Her hair was of the lightest brown, her eyes of the softest blue, and the lovely rose which bears the name of *Maiden's Blush* is not more delicate in the soft glow of its colouring than was the vermilion tint upon her cheeks. She was of middle stature, and her figure might have served a sculptor as a model. But she was good and gentle as she was beautiful. The widow mentioned her name in her prayers—the poor blessed her.

Now Agnes was about eighteen, when a young man of her own age, named Henry Cranstoun, took up his residence for a few months in her father's house. He was the son of a distant relative of her mother, and was then articled as a clerk or apprentice to a writer to the signet in Edinburgh. He also was the only child of his parents; for, though they had had eight others, he was all that death had left them. He was the youngest son of his mother; and there was a time when there was no mother had greater cause to be proud of her children. Yea, as they hand in hand, or one by one, went forth on the sabbath morning with their parents to their place of worship, there was not an eye that looked not with delight or admiration on the little Cranstouns. The neatness of their dress, the loveliness of every countenance, the family likeness of each, the apparent affection of all, the propriety of their demeanour, interested all who looked upon them. But as untimely flowers, that by a returning frost are stricken down in beauty, so drooped, so perished, this fair and happy family. Some had said that they were too beautiful to live; and, as they also manifested much quickness and wisdom for their years, there were others who said to Mrs Cranstoun, as she was shedding their shining hair upon their brows, that she would never comb an old head! This is a cold, cruel, and ignorant prophecy—it has sent foreboding and unhappiness into the bosom of many a fond mother; but, in this case, it needed not the gift of a seer to foretell the gloomy tidings. Consumption lurked amidst the beauty that glowed on every cheek; and seven of the fair family had fallen victims to the progress of the insidious destroyer, till Henry alone was left. And now, even upon him also, it seemed to have set its mark. The hollow cough and the flushed cheek, the languidness by day and the restlessness by night, gave evidence that the disease was there.

Change of air and less study were recommended by the physicians as the only means by which Henry might be saved; and he was sent over to Northumberland, to the house of William Percy, his mother's friend.

It was about that period of the year which is spoken of as the "fall of the leaf," when Henry Cranstoun first arrived at Till-side; William Percy had just gathered in his harvest, and Henry met with the kindly welcome of a primitive family. The father and mother, and their daughter, received him as one whom they were to snatch from the hands of death. In a few days, the goat's milk and the bracing air, which came with health on its wings from the adjacent mountains, wrought a visible change in the appearance of the invalid. His cough became more softened, his eyes less languid, his step more firm, and he panted not as he walked. He felt returning strength flowing through his veins—in his bosom, in the moving of his fingers, he felt it. He walked out by the side of Agnes—she led him by the banks of the Till, by the foot of the hills, by the woods where the brown leaves were falling, and by the solitary glen.

Perhaps I might have said that the presence of Agnes contributed not less than the mountain air and the change of scenery to his restoration to health. Of this I have not been told. Certain it is that her beauty and her gentleness had spread their influence over his heart, as spring, with its wooing breath, awakens the dreaming earth from its winter sleep. It was not the season when nature calls forth the soul to love; for the cushat was silent in the wood, the mavis voiceless on the thorn, the birds were dumb on every spray, the wild-flowers had closed their leaves and drooped, and the meadows lost their fragrance. But, as they wandered forth together, a lark started up at their feet; it raised its autumn song over their heads; it poured it in their ears. Both raised their eyes in joy towards the singing bird; they listened to it with delight. His fingers were pressed on hers as he heard it, as though he would have said—"How sweet it is!" But the lustre forsook his eyes while he yet listened—he sighed, and was silent. They returned home together, and Agnes strove to cheer him; but his spirit was heavy, and he pressed her hand more fervently in his. The song of the lark seemed to have touched a cord of sadness in his bosom.

Henry was heard walking backward and forward in his room throughout the night; and on the following morning at breakfast he put a paper into the hands of Agnes, on which was written the following rhymes :—

THE LARK'S AUTUMNAL SONG.

(INSCRIBED TO AGNES PERCY.)

Again in the heavens thy hymn is heard,
Bird of the daring wing!
When last ye sprang from the daisied sward
Making the welkin ring,
Thy lay the dreaming buds awoke—
Thy voice the spell of winter broke—
The primrose, on the mossy brae,
Burst beauteous into life and day,
And smiled to hear thee sing!
The children clapped their tiny hands;
The shout rang through their little bands,
Hailing the bird of spring!
Thy lay made earth and air rejoice,
And nature heard thee as an angel's voice.

Again in the heavens thy hymn is heard,
Bird of the mournful song!
A lonely daisy yet decks the sward,
The last of the summer throng.

While here and there, upon the brae,
Some primrose, *languid as the ray*
Of hope that vanisheth away
Upon the cheek of death,
Untimely opes its golden wing,
Mistaking, as it hears thee sing,
That thou art come to tell of spring,
And not of winter's wrath.
But now thy strain is as one that grieves—
Thou singest the dirge of the falling leaves!

Again in the heavens thy hymn I hear,
Bird of the merry song!
Thou art ringing a lay in old winter's ear—
Ye bid him farewell, and ye welcome him here—
Ye help the old man along!
Ye are singing to look on the fruits of the year
Gathered in, and in ripeness, with plenty around;
And ye pour o'er earth's fulness a rapturous sound.
Ye are singing a strain that man should have sung—
Man with ingratitude sealed on his tongue:
At *seed-time*, thy joyous and *hope-breathing* lay,
To the ploughman was sung, as an anthem, all day,
And now at his *harvest* ye greet him again,
And call him to join in thy *thanksgiving* strain.

Agnes wept as she perused the foreboding lines, which he had marked in what printers call Italics, in the second stanza, by drawing a line under them. She felt interested in the fate of Henry Cranstoun—deeply interested. We believe that, like the gentle Desdemona, she wished that

"Heaven had made her such a man;"

for, though the young writer to the signet spoke not

"Of war, and broils, and battles,"

his tongue was the interpreter of nature—he dwelt as an enthusiast on its beauties, its mysteries, its benevolence, its glorious design; and, through all, he would point

"Through Nature up to Nature's God!"

It is a common saying, "that you cannot put an old head upon young shoulders?" but, if ever the truth of the saying might be disputed, it was in the case of Henry Cranstoun. The deaths of his brothers and his sisters had rested upon his young mind—they had struck it with awe—they had made him to feel that he, too, must die,—he, indeed, felt as though the shadow of death were creeping over him; and the thoughts and the hopes of eternity early became the companions of his spirit: He treasured up the words of the inspired preacher, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." He treasured them up, and he practised them; and his deportment gave him a deeper interest in the eyes of the Northumberland farmer and his family.

William Percy was esteemed by his neighbours as a church-going and a good man. He was kind to his servants; he paid every man his own; he was an affectionate husband and a fond father; the poor turned not away murmuring from his door; and every Sunday night he knelt with his wife and with his daughter, before their Maker, in worship, as though it were a duty which was to be discharged but once in seven days. Now, it was late on Saturday night when Henry Cranstoun arrived at their house; and, on the following evening, he joined in the devotions of the family. But Monday night came, and the supper passed, and the Bibles were not brought. Henry inquired—

"Is it not time for worship?"

The question went to the conscience of the farmer—he felt that before his Creator, who preserved him, who gave him every breath he drew, he had knelt with his family but once a-week. "Is not He the Almighty of all time and of all eternity," asked his conscience; "and have I not served Him as though He were Lord of the Sabbath only? I forsake him for a week—where should I be if He left me but for a moment?"

"Agnes, love," said he aloud, "bring the books."

She cheerfully obeyed; and the Bibles were laid upon the table. The psalm was read and the voice of praise was heard; and as the hinds in the adjoining houses heard the sound, they followed the example of their master. Hitherto, like their employer, they had lifted their voices in thanksgiving but once a week, as if a few minutes spent in praise and in prayer, and in the reading of a chapter, were all that was necessary for example to a family, or for gratitude to Him who sustained, protected, and gave them being from moment to moment. I should not dwell upon this, were it not that there are many good and Christian parents, who conceive that they fulfil the injunction of "praying often with and for their children" by causing them to kneel around them on a sabbath night. But this, certainly, is a poor fulfilment of the oath which they have taken—or which, if they have not taken, they are equally bound to perform. I do not say that the man who daily prays with his family will have the gratification of seeing all of them following in his footsteps, or that all of them will think as he thinks; but he may be of one sect, and some of them of another; yet, let them go where they will, let them be thrown into what company they may, let temptation assail them in every form, and absence throw its shadows over their father's house, yet the remembrance, the fervour, the words of a father's prayers, will descend upon their souls like a whisper from Heaven, kindling the memory and awakening the conscience; and, if the child of such a man depart into sin, the small still voice will not die in his ear. Nay, the remembrance of the father's voice will be heard in the son's heart above the song of the bacchanal, and the lowly remembered voice of psalms rise upon his memory, making him insensible to the peal of instruments. I have listened to the sonorous swell of the organ in the Roman church and the Episcopal cathedral, to the chant of the choristers and the music of the anthem, and I have been awed by the sounds; but they produced not the feelings of peace and of reverence, I might say of religion, which are inspired by the lowly voices of a congregated family joining together in their hymn of praise. I have thought that such sounds, striking on the ear of the guilty, would arrest them in their progress.

Such was the change which Henry Cranstoun introduced into the house of his host. From that moment, Agnes regarded him with a deeper interest, her father loved him, and her mother looked on him as a son. But, although his mind had been early imbued with serious impressions, he was a lover of all that was beautiful in nature—he was warm of heart and eloquent of speech—and his form was such as the eye of a maiden might look on with complacency.

Christmas had passed before he left the house of his mother's friend, and health again glowed on his cheeks, strength revisited his frame. No one that saw Henry Cranstoun upon his entering the house of Mr Percy three months before, and who had not seen him in the meanwhile, would have known him to be the same individual. But Agnes noted no change in him. She knew that his health was now restored; but she had begun to hope and love at the same moment, and she had never thought that Henry would die. His eyes had ever been bright to her—his voice ever pleasing; and her beauty, her gentleness, her sweetness of temper, her kindness, her looks, her tones of affection, had fallen upon his bosom, till every thought, save the thought of Agnes, was banished.

He was to leave her father's house—he bade her *farewell;* till that moment, they had not known how dear they were unto each other. They had never spoken of love—and, to hearts that do love, there is little need for such declarations. The affection of every glance, the guarded delicacy of every action, speaks it more plainly than the impassioned eloquence of language. True eloquence is feeling, and feeling dictates the words to be used, pouring them forth in the full tide of the heart's emotion; but, though love also be feeling, it is not of that kind which makes men eloquent. True love is dumb as true gratitude.

It speaks from the glowing eye and the throbbing bosom; from the hand passionately grasped—not from the tongue.

Henry and Agnes said little; but they fell upon the necks of each other when they parted. She wept, and from his eyes the tear was ready to fall. He kissed her brow, and said that in the spring he would return.

He left Northumberland, and his parents welcomed him as one received from the dead. He was strong and healthy, and he alone, of all their children, seemed to have overcome the power of the destroyer. Yet a week never passed but he wrote to his friends, who had snatched him as from the gates of death; or rather I should say, that he wrote to the gentle Agnes, requesting that the expression of his gratitude might be given to her parents, until he returned to thank them. But spring came, and with it Henry Cranstoun returned to Till-side. Health still glowed in his eyes and beamed upon his cheeks. He was fond of angling, and, with his rod in his hand, he sought amusement in the gentle art; yet his favourite pastime afforded him no pleasure, save when Agnes was by his side, and then they would sit down on the brae-side together, with her hand in his, and the fishing-rod on the ground, and they forgot that he had gone out to fish, until evening came, and he returned with his creel empty.

Thus five years passed on, and twice in every year Henry Cranstoun visited his friends in Northumberland. He had commenced practice in Edinburgh; fair prospects opened before him; his marriage-day was fixed; and need I say that the bride was Agnes?

The ceremony was to be performed in the parish church, which was situated about a mile from her father's house. Henry was only expected to arrive an hour or two before the marriage was to take place. The bosom of fair Agnes throbbed with tumultuous joy. Her parents gazed upon her—blessed her, and were happy. She sat before them, arrayed, a bride for the altar. He whom she loved and they esteemed was that day to make her his wife. Her mother gazed on her with pride—she blessed her Agnes. Her father's heart glowed within him. The bridemaidens were come—Agnes was impatient, but still happy; no fear, no doubt, had risen in her mind. She knew her Henry.

But the last hour arrived, and Henry came not. Her uneasiness increased. The servants were sent to a neighbouring hill; but no chaise, no horseman appeared in sight. Agnes became unhappy; paleness overspread her cheeks. The company were silent. Her father's watch hung over the mantel-piece, and she sat at the opposite side of the room; yet its ticking fell upon her ears slow and heavy, as sounds from a hammer on an anvil. Tears, which she had struggled to conceal, now gathered in her eyes. Some evil had befallen Henry, she said, and wept.

The hour which had been appointed for the ceremony was past; but still he came not. Her fears, her anxiety increased, and she wept the more, refusing to be comforted. She knew not what she feared; but her breast was filled with misery. She had received a letter from him but three days before. She read it again—it breathed the language of impassioned affection, but his truth she doubted not; yet there was an incoherency, a vehemence, in some parts of the letter, which were not like the style of Henry. A vague horror shot across her thoughts, and her hand trembled as she laid the letter aside.

Still the servants were dispatched to see if he approached, and at length they brought tidings that two horsemen were riding towards the house. Agnes strove to wipe away the tears from her eyes, but her heart yet throbbed, and others rose in their place. The horsemen drew near the house. Those of the company who beheld them from the windows drew back with a look of dismay. Agnes clasped her hands together as she beheld the expression of their countenances. The evil she apprehended was about to be revealed. The parish clergyman, and the minister of the congregation to which Mr Percy belonged, entered the room. She started from her seat as they entered—she wrung her hands on her bosom—her eyes seemed fixed and motionless with misery—her lips moved—her tongue struggled for utterance.

"Be comforted!" said one of the reverend visiters, kindly.

"Is my Henry dead?" she exclaimed—"is he dead?"

"He is not dead," was the reply; "but"—and the clergyman hesitated a moment to proceed.

"*His mind is dead!*" added the wretched bride, and sank back in her mother's arms. The dismal thought flashed upon her soul, the vague horror that she had shrank from before became tangible—the incoherence and vehemence of passages in his last letter were suddenly and fearfully interpreted.

The tidings which the clergymen had to communicate, her fears had already told. The mind of Henry Cranstoun had become a wreck. A cloud fell upon his reason; and, on the day that he was to lead his bride to the altar, he was placed an inmate of the gloomy cells of Bedlam.

Several months had passed, and the grief of Agnes became more tranquil, but not less deep. She intreated permission to visit her bridegroom in the place of his confinement, and her parents fondly endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose; but it became the one—the ruling wish of her heart—and they consented. Her father accompanied her to the dreary prison-house. But I shall not attempt to describe the heart-rending interview, nor to tell how the iron which fettered him entered her soul. He knew her—he wept before her as a child—he exclaimed, "My brain!—my brain!" and pressed his hand upon his brow. Around him were strewed scraps of paper: she beheld her name upon each; they were covered with verses of love and of wildness. But I will not dwell upon the harrowing scene, upon the words that were spoken, and the fitful gleams of reason that flitted across his soul, as his eyes remained rivetted on the face he loved. But when her father, with a faltering voice, suggested that they should depart, and took her hand to lead her from the cell, a scream of loud and bitter agony burst from the wretched maniac. "Agnes:—Agnes!" he cried, and his wailing was as the lamentation of a lost spirit. Anguish overpowered her, and she was borne insensible from the cell in her father's arms.

Seven long and dreary years passed, and the mind of Henry was still bewildered; still was he an inmate of the melancholy asylum, and no hope was entertained of his recovery. But the heart of Agnes knew no change—for him she still shed the secret tear and offered up the secret prayer.

But her father's fortunes were altered. He had been induced to enter into a speculation with one who deceived him, and in it the industry of years was swallowed up and lost. He was obliged to leave his farm, and he now resided in a small cottage in its neighbourhood. Still there were many who sought the hand of the fair Rose of Till-side; but she chose rather to brood over the remembrance of poor ruined Henry than to listen to their addresses. But amongst them was a young gentleman named Walker, whose condition was far above hers, and who for two years had vainly sought a place in her affections. In the day of her father's distress, he had been his friend, and he yet sought to place him again in a state of independence. The health of Mr Percy, also, began to decline; the infirmities of age were growing upon him; and the little that he had been able to save from the wreck of his capital was wasting rapidly away. He became melancholy with the thought that he should die a pauper, or leave his wife and his daughter in want; and, in the presence of Agnes, he often spoke of Mr Walker—of the excellence of his character—of his wealth—of what he had done for him in the midst of his misfortunes—of what he still desired to do—and of his affection for her. She listened to her father's words in sorrow and in silence, and, on her pillow by night, she wept because of them. To her the remembrance

of Henry Cranstoun was dearer than the temptations of wealth, and her heart clung to him with a constancy which neither time, misery, nor hopelessness could shake. She was grateful to her father's friend for the kindness he had shewn him, and for the generosity of the proposals he had made—yet she found that she could not love him, that her bosom had room for none but Henry.

Poverty, however, entered her parents' dwelling, and her father seemed drooping for lack of nourishment which his increasing feebleness required. Her mother, too, sat silent and melancholy, occasionally raising her eyes to her daughter's face, with a look that implored her to save her father. The old man had been ordered wine daily; but their penury was now such that they could not purchase it, and the plainest food had become scanty on their table.

Such was their situation, and they were sitting sorrowful together, when Mr Walker entered the room. He approached Agnes respectfully, he took her hand.

"Dear Agnes," he began, "can one with so kind a heart look with indifference on the wants and the sufferings of a father and a mother? It is in your power to make them happy, to restore them to prosperity. For two years I have sought your hand, without meeting one look of encouragement or one word of hope. Yet believe me, Agnes, I admire the constancy which induces you to cherish a hopeless passion and reject me. If not for my sake, yet for the sake of your poor father, for that of your fond mother, yea, for your own sake, dearest, permit me to call you mine. I do not ask your love now; give me but your esteem, and I will study to deserve your affection. Dear friends, plead for me," he added, addressing her parents.

Her father laid his hand upon hers—"Dear Agnes," said he, "your father is now a poor man—he is very poor. I fear the hand of death is already upon me; and when I am gone, who will provide for your poor mother—who will protect thee, my child? It is the only wish of my heart to see you provided for, and your father would die in peace. And oh, my Agnes, as your father's dying request, permit me to bestow your hand upon this generous youth."

"Save us, my sweet one!" cried her mother, and she flung her arms around her daughter's neck.

"It is done!" exclaimed Agnes, bursting into tears, and she stretched out her hand to Mr Walker.

A few weeks afterwards, and the village bells rang a merry peal, children scattered flowers, and there was joy on every face, save upon the face of the fair bride, who went as a sacrifice to the altar. She heard not the words of the clergyman as he read the ceremony. She trembled, she would have fallen to the ground, but that the bride's maid supported her.

The marriage-party were returning by a foot-path from the church, the sorrowful bride resting on the arm of her bridegroom. A stranger met them—he turned aside, that they might pass. His eyes fell upon the countenance of the bride.

"O Heavens! my Agnes!" cried the stranger, in a voice of agony.

"Henry! my Henry!" screamed the wretched bride, and, starting from the side of the bridegroom, she sank on the breast of the stranger.

That stranger was indeed Henry Cranstoun. A severe illness had brought him to the verge of death, and with his restoration to health reason was restored also. He had come to take his bride to his bosom—he met her the bride of another. It was a scene of misery.

"O Agnes! Agnes!" groaned Henry, "would to Heaven I had died! You are another's though your heart is mine! Farewell! Farewell!—we must meet no more! I have endured much, but never misery like this!"

She could only exclaim—"Henry!" and speech failed her—recollection fled. Henry Cranstoun struck his hand upon his brow, and rushed wildly away. Agnes was conveyed to her father's house, as being nearer than that of her bridegroom's. She was laid upon her bed, she seemed unconscious of all around, and her tongue only uttered the word "Henry." She rose not again from the bed on which she was laid, and, within a week, her gentle spirit fled. The shock which Henry had met with occasioned a relapse of the fever from which he had but recently recovered. He was taken to the village inn. He felt that death was about to terminate his sufferings, and when he heard of the death of his Agnes, he requested to be buried by her side. Within three weeks he died, and his latest wish was fulfilled—he was laid by the side of Agnes Percy, and a rose tree was planted over their grave.

THE HEN-PECKED MAN.

Every one has heard the phrase, "*Go to Birgham!*" which signifies much the same as bidding you go to a worse place. The phrase is familiar not only on the Borders, but throughout all Scotland, and has been in use for more than five hundred years, having taken its rise from Birgham being the place where the Scottish nobility were when they dastardly betrayed their country into the hands of the first Edward; and the people, despising the conduct and the cowardice of the nobles, have rendered the saying, "*Go to Birgham!*" an expression of contempt until this day. Many, however, may have heard the saying, and even used it, who know not that Birgham is a small village, beautifully situated on the north side of the Tweed, about midway between Coldstream and Kelso; though, if I should say that the village itself is beautiful, I should be speaking on the wrong side of the truth. Yet there may be many who have both heard the saying and seen the village, who never heard of little Patie Crichton the bicker-maker. Patie was of diminutive stature, and he followed the profession (if the members of the *learned professions* be not offended at my using the term) of a cooper or bicker-maker in Birgham, for many years. His neighbours used to say of him—"The puir body s henpecked."

Patie was in the habit of attending the neighbouring fairs with the water-cogs, cream-bowies, bickers, piggins, and other articles of his manufacture. It was Dunse fair, and Patie said he "had dune extraordinar' weel—the sale had been far beyond what he expeckit." His success might be attributed to the circumstance that, when out of the sight and hearing of his better half, for every bicker he sold he gave his customers half-a-dozen jokes into the bargain. Every one, therefore, liked to deal with little Patie. The fair being over, he retired with a crony to a public-house in the Castle Wynd, to crack of old stories over a glass, and inquire into each other's welfare. It was seldom they met, and it was as seldom that Patie dared to indulge in a single glass; but, on the day in question, he thought they could manage another gill, and another was brought. Whether the sight of it reminded him of his domestic miseries, and of what awaited him at home, I cannot tell; but, after drinking another glass, and pronouncing the spirits excellent, he thus addressed his friend:—

"Ay, Robin, (his friend's name was Robin Roughead,) ye're a happy man—ye're maister in your ain house, and ye've a wife that adores and *obeys* ye; but I'm nae better than naebody at my ain fireside. I'll declare I'm waur: wife an' bairns laugh at me—I'm treated like an outlan body an' a fule. Though, without me, they micht gang and beg, there is nae mair respeck paid to me than if I were a pair o' auld bauchels flung into a corner. Fifteen years syne I couldna believed it o' Tibby though onybody had sworn it to me. I firmly believe that a gude wife is the greatest

blessin' that can be conferred upon a man upon this earth. I can imagine it by the treasure that my faither had in my mither; for, though the best may hae *words* atween them occasionally, and I'm no saying that they hadna, yet they were just like passing showers to mak' the kisses o' the sun upon the earth mair sweet after them. Her whole study was to please him and to mak' him comfortable. She was never happy but when he was happy; an' he was just the same wi' her. I've heard him say that she was worth unold gold. But, O Robin! if I think that a guid wife is the greatest blessin' a man can enjoy, weel do I ken that a scoldin', domineerin' wife is his greatest curse. It's a terrible thing to be snooled in your ain house—naebody can form an idea o't but they wha experience it.

"Ye remember whan I first got acquainted wi' Tibby, she was doing the bondage work at Riselaw. I first saw her coming out o' Eccles kirk ae day, and I really thocht that I had never seen a better-faured or a more gallant-looking lass. Her cheeks were red and white like a half-ripe strawberry, or rather, I should say, like a cherry; and she seemed as modest and meek as a lamb. It wasna very lang until I drew up; and, though she didna gie me ony great encouragement at first, yet, in a week or twa, after the ice was fairly broken, she became remarkably ceevil, and gied me her oxter on a Sunday. We used to saunter about the loanings, no saying meikle, but unco happy; and I was aye restless whan I was out o' her sight. Ye may guess that the shoemaker was nae loser by it during the six months that I ran four times a-week, wet or dry, between Birgham and Riselaw. But the term-time was drawing nigh, and I put the important question, and pressed her to name the day. She hung her head, and she no seemed to ken weel what to say; for she was sae mim and sae gentle then, that ye wad hae said 'butter wadna melt in her mouth.' And when I pressed her mair urgently—

"'I'll just leave it to yersel', Peter,' says she.

"I thocht my heart wad louped out at my mouth. I believe there never was a man sae beside himsel' wi' joy in this warld afore. I fairly danced again, and cut as many antics as a merry-andrew. 'O Tibby,' says I,

> "I'm ower happy now!—Oh, haud my head!
> This gift o' joy is like to be my dead.'"

"'I hope no, Peter,' said she; 'I wad rather hae ye to live than dee for me.'

"I thocht she was as sensible as she was bonny, and better natured than baith.

"Weel, I got the house set up, the wedding-day cam, and everything passed ower as agreeably as onybody could desire. I thocht Tibby turnin' bonnier and bonnier. For the first five or six days after the weddin', everything was '*hinny*', *and* '*my love*,' and '*Tibby, dear*,' *or* '*Peter, dear*.' But matters didna stand lang at this. It was on a Saturday nicht, I mind, just afore I was gaun to drap work, that three or four acquaintances cam into the shop to wush me joy, and they insisted I should pay off for the weddin'. Ye ken I never was behint hand; and I agreed that I wad just fling on my coat and step up wi' them to Orange Lane. So I gaed into the house and took down my market coat, which was hingin' behint the bed; and after that I gaed to the kist to tak out a shilling or twa; for, up to that time, Tibby had not usurped the office of Chancellor o' the Exchequer. I did it as cannily as I could; but she had suspected something, and heard the jinkin' o' the siller.

"'What are ye doing, Patie?' says she—'whar are ye gaun?'

"I had never heard her voice hae sic a sound afore, save the first time I drew up to her, when it was rather sharp than agreeable.

"'Ou, my dear,' says I, 'I'm just gaun up to Orange Lane a wee while'

"'To Orange Lane!' says she—'what in the name o fortune's gaun to take ye there?'

"'O hinny,' says I, 'it's just a neebor lad or twa that's drapped in to wush us joy, and, ye ken, we canna but be neebor-like.'

"'Ay! the sorrow joy them!' says she, 'and neebor too!—an' how meikle will that cost ye?'

"'Hoot, Tibby,' says I, 'for I was quite astonished at her, 'ye no understand things, woman.'

"'No understand them!' says she; 'I wish to guidness that ye wad understand them though! If that's the way ye intend to mak' the siller flee, it's time there were somebody to tak' care o't.'

"I had put the silver in my pocket, and I was gaun to the door mair surprised than I can weel express, when she cried to me—

"'Mind what ye spend, and see that ye dinna stop.'

"'Ye need be under nae apprehensions o' that, hinny,' said I, wishing to pacify her.

"'See that it be sae,' cried she, as I shut the door.

"I joined my neebors in a state of greater uneasiness o' mind than I had experienced for a length o' time. I couldna help thinkin' but that Tibby had rather early begun to tak the upper hand, and it was what I never expected from her. However, as I was saying, we went up to Orange Lane, and we sat doun, and ae gill brocht on anither. Tibby's health and mine were drank; we had several capital sangs; and, I daresay, it was weel on for ten o'clock afore we rose to gang awa. I was nae mair affected wi' drink than I am at this moment. But, somehow or ither, I was uneasy at the idea o' facing Tibby. I thought it would be a terrible thing to quarrel wi' her. I opened the door, and, bolting it after me, slipped in, half on the edge o' my fit. She was sitting wi' her hand at her haffit by the side o' the fire, but she never let on that she either saw or heard me—she didna speak a single word. If ever there was a woman

> 'Nursing her wrath to keep it warm'

it was her that nicht. I drew in a chair, and, though I was half-feared to speak—

"What's the matter, my pet?' says I—'what's happened ye?'

"But she sat looking into the fire, and never let-on she heard me. 'E'ens ye like, Meg Dorts,' thought I, as Allan Ramsay says; but I durstna say it, for I saw that there was a storm brewing. At last, I ventured to say again—

"'What ails ye, Tibby, dear—are ye no weel?'

"'Weel!' cried she—'wha can be weel? Is this the way ye mean to carry on? What a time o' nicht is this to keep a body to, waiting and fretting on o' ye, their lane. Do you no think shame o' yoursel'?'

"'Hoot, woman,' says I, 'I'm surprised at ye; I'm sure ye hae naething to mak a wark about—it's no late yet.'

"'I dinna ken what ye ca' late,' said she; 'it wadna be late among yer cronies, nae doubt; but if it's no late, it's early, for I warrant it's mornin'.'

"'Nonsense!' says I.

"'Dinna tell me its nonsense,' said she, 'for I'll be spoken to in na sic way—I'll let you ken that. But how meikle has it cost ye? Ye wad be treating them, nae doubt—and how meikle hae ye spent, if it be a fair question?'

"'Toots, Tibby!' said I, 'whar's the cause for a' this? What great deal could it cost me?'

"'But hair by hair makes the carle's head bare, added she—'mind ye that; and mind ye that ye've a house to keep aboon your head noo. But, if ye canna do it, I maun do it for ye—say gie me the key o' that kist—gie me it instantly; and I'll tak care how ye gang drinkin' wi' ony body and treatin' them till mornin' again.'

"For the sake o' peace I gied her the key; for she was speakin' sae loud that I thocht a' the neebors wad hear—and she had nae sooner got it, than awa she gaed to

the kist and counted every shilling. I had nae great abundance then mair than I've now; and—

"'Is that a' ye hae?' said she; 'an' yet ye'll think o' gaun drinkin' and treatin' folk frae Saturday nicht till Sabbath mornin'! If this is the life ye intend to lead, I wush to guidness I had ne'er had onything to say to ye.'

"'And if this is the life ye intend to lead me,' thought I, I wush the same thing.'

"But that was but the beginnin' o' my slavery. From that hour to this she has continued on from bad to worse. No man livin' can form an idea o' what I've suffered but mysel'. In a mornin', or rather, I may say, in a forenoon, for it was aye nine or ten o'clock afore she got up, she sat doun to her tea and white scones and butter, while I had to be content wi' a scrimpit bicker o' brose and sour milk for kitchen. Nor was this the warst o't; for, when I cam' in frae my wark for my breakfast, mornin' after mornin', the fire was black out; and there had I, before I could get a bite to put in my mouth, to bend doun upon my knees and blaw it, and blaw it, till I was half-blind wi' ashes—for we hadna a pair o' bellowses; and there wad she lie grumblin' a' the time, ca'in' me useless *this*, and useless *that;* and I just had to put up wi' it. But, after our first bairn was born she grew far warse, and I becam mair and mair miserable every day. If I had been sleeping through the nicht, and the bairn had begun a hickin', or whingin'—then she was at the scoldin', and I was sure to be started out o' my sleep wi' a great drive atween the shouthers, and her crying—

"'Get up, ye lazy body, ye—get up, and see what's the maiter wi' this bairn.'

"An' this was the trade half-a-dizen o' times in a nicht.

"At last, there was ae day, when a' that I had dune was simply saying a word about the denner no bein' ready, and afore ever I kenned whar I was, a cracky-stool that she had bought for the bairn cam' fleein' across the room, and gied me a dirl on the elbow, that made me think my arm was broken. Ye may guess what a stroke it was, when I tell ye I couldna lift my hand to my head for a week to come. Noo, the like o' that, ye ken, was what mortal man couldna stand.

"'Tibby,' said I, and I looked very desperate and determined, 'what do ye mean by this conduct? By a' that's gracious, I'll no put up wi' it ony langer!'

"'Ye'll no put up wi' it, *ye cratur!*' said she; 'if ye gie me ony mair o' yer provocation, I'll pu' yer lugs for ye—wull ye put up wi' that?'

"It was terrible for a man to hear his ain wife ca' him *a cratur!*—just as if I had been a monkey or a lapdoug!

"'O ye disdainfu' limmer,' thought I; 'but if I could humble your proud spirit, I wad do it!' Weel, there was a grand new ballant hawkin' about the country at the time—it was ca'd *Watty and Meg*—ye have nae doubt seen't. Meg was just such a terrible termagant as my Tibby; and I remembered the perfect reformation that was wrought upon her by Watty's bidding her farweel, and threatenin' to list. So it just struck me that I wad tak a leaf out o' the ballant. Therefore, keeping the same serious and determined look, for I was in no humour to seem otherwise—'Tibby,' says I, 'there shall be nae mair o' this. But I will gang and list this very day, and ye'll see what will come ower ye then—ye'll maybe repent o' yer conduct whan it's ower late.

"'List! ye *totum* ye!' said she; 'do ye say *list?*' and she said this in a tone and wi' a look o' derision that gaed through my very soul. 'What squad will ye list into?—what regiment will tak ye? Do ye intend to list for a fifer laddie?' And as she said this, she held up her oxter, as if to tak me below't.

I thought I wad hae drapped doun wi' indignation. I could hae strucken her, if I durst. Ye observe I am just five feet twa inches and an eight, upon my stockin'-soles. That is rather below the army standard—and I mann say it's a very foolish standard; for a man o' my height stands a better chance to shoot anither then a giant that wad fire ower his head. But she was aware that I was below the mark, and my threat was of no avail; so I just had to slink awa into the shop, rubbin' my elbow.

"But the cracky-stool was but the beginnin' o' her drivin'; there wasna a week after that but she let flee at me whatever cam in the way, whenever I, by accident, crossed her cankered humour. It's a wonder that I'm in the land o' the living; for I've had the skin peeled off my legs—my arms maistly broken—my head cut, and ither parts o' my body a' black and blue, times out o' number. I thought her an angel whan I was courtin' her; but, O Robin! she has turned out—I'll no say what—an adder!—a teeger!—a she fury!

"As for askin' onybody into the house, it's a thing I durstna do for the life that's in my body. I never did it but ance, and that was whan an auld schulefellow, that had been several years in America, ca'ed at the shop to see me. After we had cracked a while—

"'But I maun see the wife, Patie, says he.

"Whether he had heard aboot her behaviour or no, I canna tell; but, I assure ye, his request was onything but agreeable to me. However, I took him into the house, and I introduced him wi' fear and tremblin'.

"Tibby, dear,' said I—and I dinna think I had ca'ed her *dear* for ten years afore—'here's Mr W——, an auld schulefellow o' mine, that's come a' the way frae America, an' ca'ed in to see ye.'

"'Ye're aye meetin' wi' auld schulefellows, or some set or ither, to tak ye aff ye're wark,' muttered she, sulkily, but loud enough for him to hear.

"I was completely at a loss what to do or say next; but, pretending as though I hadna heard her, I said, as familiarly and kindly as I could, though my heart was in a terrible swither—'Bring out the bottle, lass.'

"'Bottle!' quo' she, 'what bottle?—what does the man mean?—has he pairted with the little sense that he ever had?' But had ye seen her as she said this!—I've seen a cloud black when driven wi' a hurricane, and I've seen it awfu' when roarin' in the agony o' thunder; but never did I see onything that I was mair in fear o' than my wife's face at that moment. But, somehow or ither, I gathered courage to say—'Hoots, woman, what's the use o' behavin' that way? I'm sure ye ken weel aneugh it's the speerit bottle.'

"'The speerit bottle!' cried she, wi' a scream; 'and wheu was there a speerit bottle within this door? Dinna shew yoursel' aff to your American freend for a greater man than ye are, Patie. I think, if wi' a' that ye bring in, I get meat and bits o' duds for your bairns, I do very weel.'

"This piece o' impudence completely knocked me stupid, for, wad ye believe it Robin, though she had lang driven a' my friends frae about the house, yet never did ony o' *her* friends ca'—and that was maistly every Sunday, and every Coldstream market-day—but there was the bottle out frae the cupboard, which she aye kept under lock and key; and a dram, and a bit short-bread nae less, was aye and to this day handed round to every ane o' them. They hae discovered that it's worth while to make Patie the bickermaker's a half-way house. But, if I happen to be in when they ca', though she pours out a fu' glass a-piece for them, she takes aye guid care to stand in afore me when she comes to me, between them and me, so that they canna see what she is doing, or how meikle she pours out; and, I assure ye, it is seldom a thimble-fu' that fa's to my share, though she hauds the bottle lang up in her hand—mony a time, no a weetin'; and, again and again have I shoved my head past her side, and said—"Your health, Mrs So-and-so"—or, "Yours, Mr Such-a-thing," wi' no as meikle in my glass as wad droun a midge. Or, if I was sae placed that she durstna but, for shame, fill a glass within half-an-inch of

the tap or sae, she wad gie me a look, or a wink, or mak a motion o' some kind, which weel did I ken the meanin' o', and which was the same as saying—'Drink it if ye daur!' O Robin, man! its weel for ye that no kens what it is to be a footba' at your ain fireside. I daresay, my freend burned at the bane for me; for he got up, and—

"'I wish you good day, Mr Crichton,' said he; 'I have business in Kelso to-night yet, and can't stop.'

"I was perfectly overpowered wi' shame; but it was a relief to me when he gaed awa—and I slipped out after him, and into the shop again.

"But Tibby's isna the only persecution that I hae to put up wi'; for we hae five bairns, and she's brought them a' up to treat me as she does hersel'. If I offer to correct them, they cry out—'I'll tell my mither!'—and frae the auldest to the youngest o' them, when they speak aboot me, it is *he* did this, or *he* did that—they for ever talk o' me as *him!—him!* I never got the name o' *faither* frae ane o' them—and it's a' her doings. Now, I just ask ye simply if ony faither would put up wi' the like o' that! But I maun put up wi't. If I were offering to lay hands upon them for't, I am sure and persuaded she wad raise a' Birgham about me—my life wadna be safe where she is—but, indeed, I needna say that, for it never is.

"But there is ae thing that grieves me beyond a' that I hae mentioned to ye. Ye ken my mither, puir auld body, is a widow now. She is in the seventy-sixth year o' her age, and very frail. She has naebody to look after her but me—naebody that has a natural right to do it; for I never had ony brothers, as ye ken; and, as for my twa sisters, I daresay they just have a sair aneugh fecht wi' their ain families, and as they are at a distance, I dinna ken how they are situated wi' their guidmen—though I maun say for them, they send her a stane o' oatmeal, an ounce o' tobacco, or a pickle tea and sugar, now and then, which is very likely as often as they hae it in their power; and that is a great deal mair than I'm *allowed* to do for her—me that has a right to protect and maintain her. A' that she has to support her is fifteen pence a-week aff the parish o' Mertoun. O Robin, man!—Robin, man!—my heart rugs within me, when I talk to you about this. A' that I hae endured is naething to it! To see my puir auld mither in a state o' starvation, and no to be allowed to gie her a sixpence! O Robin, man!—Robin, man!—is it no awfu'? When she was first left destitute, and a widow, I tried to break the matter to Tibby, and to reason wi' her.

"'O Tibby, woman!' said I, 'I'm very distressed. Here's my faither laid in the grave, and I dinna see what's to come o' my mither, puir body—she is auld, and she is frail—she has naebody to look after or provide for her but me'.

"You!' cried Tibby—'you! I wush ye wad mind what ye are talkin' about! Ye have as many dougs, I can tell ye, as ye hae banes to pike! Let your mither do as ither widows hae done afore her—let the parish look after her.'

"'O Tibby, woman!' said I; 'but if ye'll only consider—the parish money is very sma', and, puir body, it will mak her heart sair to receive a penny o't; for she weel kens that my faither would rather hae deed in a ditch than been behauden to either a parish or an individual for a sixpence.'

"'An' meikle they hae made by their pride,' said Tibby. 'I wush ye wad haud your tongue.'

"'Ay, but Tibby,' says I, for I was nettled mair than I durst shew it, 'but she has been a guid mother to me, and ye ken yersel, that she's no been an ill *guid-mother* to ye. She never stood in the way o' you and me comin' thegither, though I was paying six shillings a-week into the house.'

"'And what am I obliged to her for that?' interrupted my Jezebel.

"'I dinna ken, Tibby,' says I, 'but its a hard thing for a son to see a mother in want, when he can assist her. Now, it isna meikle she takes—she never was used wi' daintes; and, if I may just tak her hame, little will serve her, and her meat will ne'er be missed.'

"'Ye born idiot!' cried Tibby. 'I aye thought ye a fule—but ye are warse than a fule! Bring your mither here. An auld, cross-grained, faut-finding wife, that I ne'er could hae patience to endure for ten minutes in my days! Bring her here, say ye! No! while I live in this house, I'll let ye ken that I'll be *mistress*."

"'Ay, and maister too, thought I. I found it was o' nae use to argue wi' her. There was nae possibility o' gettin' my mither into the house; and as to assisting her wi' a shillin' or twa at a time by chance, or paying her house-rent, or sending her a load o' coals, it was perfectly out o' the question, and beyond my power. Frae the night that I went to Orange Lane to this moment, I hae never had a sixpence under my thumb that I could ca' my ain. Indeed, I never hae money in my hands, unless it be on a day like this, when I hae to gang to a fair, or the like o' that; and even then, before I start, her leddyship sees every bowie, bicker, and piggin, that gangs into the cart—she kens the price o' them as weel as I do; and if I shouldna bring hame either money or goods according to her valuation, I actually believe she wad murder me. There is nae cheatin' her. It is by mere chance that, having had a gude market, I've outreached her the day by a shillin' or twa; and ane o' them I'll spend wi' you, Robin, and the rest shall gang to my mither. O man! ye may bless your stars that ye dinna ken what it is to hae a termagant wife.

"I'm sorry for ye, Patie," said Robin Roughead; "but really I think, in a great measure, ye hae yoursel' to blame for it a'!"

"Me!" said Patie—"what do ye mean, Robin?"

"Why, Patie," said Robin, "I ken it is said that every ane can rule a bad wife but he that has her—and I believe it is true. I am quite convinced that naebody kens sae weel where the shoe pinches as they that hae it on; though I am quite satisfied that, had my case been yours, I wad hae brought her to her senses long afore now, though I had

'Dauded her lugs wi' Rab Roryson's bannet,'

or gien her a *hoopin'* like your friend the cooper o' Coldingham."

"Save us, man!" said Patie, who loved a joke, even though at second hand, and at his own expense; "but ye see the cooper's case is not in point, though I am in the same line; for, as I hae observed, I am only five feet twa inches and an eight in height—my wife *is not the weaker vessel*—that I ken to my sorrow."

"Weel, Patie," said Robin, "I wadna hae ye to lift your hand—I was but jokin' upon that score, it wadna be manly;—but there is ae thing that ye can do, and I am sure it wad hae an excellent effect."

"Dearsake! what is that?" cried Patie.

"For a' that has happened ye," said Robin, "ye hae just yoursel' to blame, for giein' up the key and the siller to her management that night ye gaed to Orange Lane. That is the short and the lang o' a' your troubles, Patie."

"Do you think sae?" inquired the little bicker maker.

"Yes, I think sae, Peter, and I sae it," said Robin; "and there is but ae remedy left."

"And what is that?" asked Patie, eagerly.

"Just this," said Robin—"*stop the supplies.*"

"*Stop the supplies!*" returned Patie—"what do you mean, Robin?—I canna say that I fully comprehend ye."

"I just mean this," added the other; "be your ain banker—your ain cashier—be maister o' your ain siller—let her find that it is to you she is indebted for every penny she has the power to spend; and if ye dinna bring Tibby to reason and kindness within a month, my name's no Robin Roughead."

"Do ye think that wad do it?" said Patie.

"If that wadna, naething wad," answered Robin; "but try it for a twelvemonth—begin this very nicht; and if we baith live and be spared to this time next year, I'll meet ye again, and I'll be the death o' a mutchkin, but that ye tell me Tibby's a different woman—your bairns different—your hail house different—and your auld mither comfortable."

"O man, if it might be sae," said Patie; "but this very nicht, the moment I get hame, I'll try it—and, if I succeed, I'll treat ye wi' a bottle o' wine, and I believe I never drank ane in my life."

"Agreed," said Robin; "but mind ye're no to do things by halves. Ye're no to be feared out o' your resolution because Tibby may fire and storm, and let drive the things in the house at ye—nor even though she should greet."

"I thoroughly understand ye," said Patie; "my resolution's ta'en, and I'll stand by it."

"Gie's your hand on't," said Robin; and Patie gave him his hand.

Now the two friends parted, and it is unnecessary for me either to describe their parting, or the reception which Patie, on his arriving at Birgham, met with from his spouse.

Twelve months went round, Dunse fair came again, and, after the fair was over, Patie Crichton once more went in quest of his old friend, Robin Roughead. He found him standing in the horse market, and—

"How's a' wi' ye, my freend?" says Patie.

"Oh, hearty, hearty, 'cries the other; 'but how's a' wi' ye?—how is yer family?"

"Come and get the bottle o' wine that I've to gie ye," said Patie, "and I'll tell ye a' about it."

"I'll do that," said Robin, "for my business is dune."

So they went into the same house in the Castle Wynd where they had been twelve months before, and Patie called for a bottle of wine; but he found that the house had not the wine license, and was therefore content with a gill of whisky made into toddy.

"O man," said he to Robin, "I wad pay ye half-a-dizen bottles o' wine wi' as great cheerfu'ness as I raise this glass to my lips. It was a grand advice that o' yours—*stop the supplies.*"

"I am glad to hear it," said Robin; "I was sure it was the only thing that would do."

"Ye shall hear a' about it," said Patie. "After parting wi' ye, I trudged hame to Birgham, and when I got to my house—before I had the sneck o' the door weel out o' my hand—

"'What's stopped ye to this time o' night, ye fitless, feckless cratur, ye?' cried Tibby—'whar hae ye been?—gie an account o' yourself.'

"'An account o' mysel'!' says I, and I gied the door a drive ahint me, as if I wad driven it off the hinges—'for what should I gie an account o' mysel'?—or wha should I gie it to? I suppose this house is my ain, and I can come in and gang out when I like!'

"'Yours!' cried she; 'is the *body* drunk?'

"'No,' says I; 'I'm no drunk, but I wad hae you to be decent. Where is my supper?—it is time that I had it.'

"'Ye micht hae come in in time to get it then,' said she; 'folk canna keep suppers waitin' on you.'

"'But I'll gang whar I can get it,' said I; and I offered to leave the house.

"'I'll tak the life o ye first,' said she. 'Gie me the siller. Ye had five cogs, a dizen o' bickers, twa dizen o' piggins, three bowies, four cream dishes, and twa ladles, besides the wooden spoons that I packed up mysel'. Gie me the siller—and, you puir profligate, let me see what ye hae spent.'

"'Gie you the siller!' says I; 'na, na, I've dune that lang aneugh—*I hae stopped the supplies,* my woman.'

"'Stop your breath!' cried she; 'gie me the siller, every farthin', or wo betide ye.'

"It was needless for her to say *every farthin';* for had I dune as I used to do, I kenned she wad search through every pocket o' my claes the moment she thocht me asleep—through every hole and corner o' them, to see if I had cheated her out o' a single penny—ay, and tak them up, and shake them, and shake them, after a' was dune. But I was determined to stand fast by your advice.

"'Do as ye like,' says I; 'I'll bring ye to your senses—*I've stopped the supplies.*'

"She saw that I wasna drunk, and my manner rather dumfoundered her a little. The bairns—wha, as I have tauld ye, she aye encouraged to mock me, began to giggle at me, and to mak game o' me, as usual. I banged out o' the house, and into the shop, and I took down the belt o' the bit turning lathe, and into the house I goes again wi' it in my hand.

"'Wha maks a fule o me now?' says I.

"And they a' laughed thegither, and I up wi' the belt, and I loundered them round the house and round the house, till ane screamed and anither screamed, and even their mither got clouts in trying to run betwixt them and me; and it was wha to squeel loudest. Sae, after I had brocht them a' to ken what I was, I awa yont to my mither's, and I gied her five shillings, puir body; and after stoppin' an hour wi' her, I gaed back to the house again. The bairns were a-bed, and some o' them were still sobbin', and Tibby was sittin' by the fire; but she didna venture to say a word—I had completely astonished her—and as little said I.

"There wasna a word passed between us for three days. I was beginning to carry my head higher in the house, and on the fourth day I observed that she had nae tea to her breakfast. A day or twa after, the auldest lassie cam to me ae morning about ten o'clock, and says she—

"'Faither, I want siller for tea and sugar.'

"'Gae back to them that sent ye,' says I, 'and tell them to fare as I do, and they'll save the tea and sugar.'

"But it is of nae use dwellin' upon the subject. I did stop the supplies most effectually. I very soon brocht Tibby to ken wha was her bread-winner. An' when I saw that my object was accomplished, I shewed mair kindness and affection to her than ever I had dune. The bairns became as obedient as lambs, and she soon came to say—'Peter, should I do this thing?'—or, 'Peter, should I do that thing?' So, when I had brocht her that far—'Tibby,' says I, 'we hae a butt and a ben, and it's grievin' me to see my auld mither starvin', and left by hersel' wi' naebody to look after her. I think I'll bring her hame the morn—she'll aye be o' use about the house—she'll can knit the bairn's stockin's, or darn them when they are out o' the heels.'

"'Weel, Peter,' said Tibby, 'I'm sure it's as little as a son can do, and I'm perfectly agreeable.'

"I banged up—I flung my arms round Tibby's neck—'Oh! bless ye, my dear!' says I; 'bless ye for that!—there's the key o' the kist and the siller—from this time henceforth do wi' it what ye like.'

"Tibby grat. My mother cam hame to my house the next day. Tibby did everything to mak her comfortable—a' the bairns ran at her bidden'—and, frae that day to this, there isna a happier man on this wide world than Patie Crichton the bicker-maker o' Birgham.

THE SMUGGLER.

The golden days of the smuggler are gone by; his hiding places are empty; and, like Othello, he finds his "occupation gone." Our neighbours on the other side of the herring-pond now bring us *dry bones*, according to the law, instead of *spirits*, contrary to the law. Cutters, preventive boats, and border rangers, have destroyed the *trade*—it is becoming as a tale that was told. From Spittal to Blyth—yea, from the Frith of Forth to the Tyne—brandy is no longer to be purchased for a trifle; the kilderkin of Holland gin is no longer placed at the door in the dead of night; nor is a yard of tobacco to be purchased for a penny. The smuggler's phrase, that the "*cow has calved*,"* is becoming obsolete. Now, smuggling is almost confined to crossing "the river" here and there, the "ideal line by fancy drawn;" to Scotland saying unto England—"Will you taste?" and to England replying, "Cheerfully, sister." There was a time, however, when the clincher-built lugger plied her trade as boldly, and almost as regularly, as the regular coaster, and that period is within the memory of those who are yet young. It was an evil and a dangerous trade; and it gave a character to the villagers on the sea coasts, which, even unto this day, is not wholly effaced. But in the character of the smuggler there was much that was interesting—there were many bold and redeeming points. I have known many; but I prefer at present giving a few passages from the history of one who lived before my time, and who was noted in his day as an extraordinary character.

Harry Teasdale was a native of Embleton, near Bamborough. He was the sole owner of a herring-boat and a fishing-coble; he was also the proprietor of the house in which he lived, and was reputed to be worth money—nor was it any secret that he had obtained his property by other means than those of the haddock hand-line and the herring-net. Harry, at the period we take up his history, was between forty and fifty years of age. He was a tall, thin man, with long sandy hair falling over his shoulders, and the colour of his countenance was nearly as rosy as the brandy in which he dealt. But, if there was the secrecy of midnight in his calling, his heart and his hand were open as mid-day. It is too true that money always begets the outward show of respect for him who possesses it, though in conduct he may be a tyrant, and in capacity a fool; but Harry Teasdale was respected, not because he was reputed to be rich, but because of the boldness and warmness of his heart, the readiness of his hand, and the clearness of his head. He was the king of fishermen, and the prince of smugglers, from Holy Island to Hartlepool. Nevertheless, there was nothing unusual in his appearance. Harry looked like his occupation. His dress (save where disguise was necessary) consisted in a rudely glazed sou'-wester, the flap of which came over his shoulders, half covering his long sandy hair. Around him was a coarse and open *monkey* or *pea* jacket, with a Guernsey frock beneath, and a sort of canvass kilt descending below the knee; and his feet were cased in a pair of sea boots. When not dressing his hand-lines, or sorting his nets, he might generally be seen upon the beach, with a long telescope under his arm. As Harry was possessed of more of this world's substance than his brother fishermen, so also was there a character of greater comfort and neatness about his house. It consisted of three rooms; but it also bore the distinguishing marks of a smuggler's habitation. At the door hung the hand-line, the hooks, and the creel; and, in a corner of Harry's sleeping room, a "*keg*" was occasionally visible; while over the chimney-piece hung a cutlass and four horse-pistols, and in a cupboard there were more packages of powder and pistol bullets than it became a man of peace to have in his possession. But the third room, which he called his daughter's, contained emblems of peace and happiness. Around the walls were specimens of curious needle-work, the basket of fruit and of flowers, and the landscape—the "*sampler*," setting forth the genealogy of the family for three generations, and the age of her whose fair hands wrought it. Around the window, also, carefully trained, were varieties of the geranium and the rose, the bigonia and cressula, the aloe, and the ice-plant, with others of strange leaf and lovely colouring. This Harry called his daughter's room—and he was proud of her. She was his sole thought, his only boast. His weather-beaten countenance always glowed, and there was something like a tear in his eyes, when he spoke of "my Fanny." She had little in common with the daughter of a fisherman; for his neighbours said that her mother had made her unfit for anything, and that Harry was worse than her mother had been. But that mother was no more, and she had left their only child to her widowed husband's care; and, rough as he appeared, never was there a more tender or a more anxious parent, never had there been a more affectionate husband. But I may here briefly notice the wife of Harry Teasdale, and his first acquaintance with her.

When Harry was a youth of one-and-twenty, and as he and others of his comrades were one day preparing their nets upon the sea-banks for the north herring-fishing, a bitter hurricane came suddenly away, and they observed that the mast of a Scotch smack, which was then near the Ferne Isles, was carried overboard. The sea was breaking over her, and the vessel was unmanageable; but the wind being from the north-east, she was driving towards the shore. Harry and his friends ran to get their boats in readiness, to render assistance if possible. The smack struck the ground between Embleton and North Sunderland, and being driven side-on by the force of the billows, which were dashing over her, formed a sort of break-water, which rendered it less dangerous for a boat to put off to the assistance of the passengers and crew, who were seen clinging in despair to the flapping ropes and sides of the vessel. Harry's coble was launched along the beach to where the vessel was stranded, and he and six others attempted to reach her. After many ineffectual efforts, and much danger, they gained her side, and a rope was thrown on board. Amongst the smack's passengers was a Scottish gentleman, with his family, and their governess. She was a beautiful creature, apparently not exceeding nineteen; and as she stood upon the deck, with one hand clinging to a rope, and in the other clasping a child to her side, her countenance alone, of all on board, did not betoken terror. In the midst of the storm, and through the raging of the sea, Harry was struck with her appearance. She was one of the last to leave the vessel; and when she had handed the child into the arms of a fisherman, and was herself in the act of stepping into the boat, it lurched, the vessel rocked, a sea broke over it, she missed her footing, and was carried away upon the wave. Assistance appeared impossible. The spectators on the shore, and the people in the boat, uttered a scream. Harry dropped the helm, he sprung from the boat he buffeted the boiling surge, and, after a hope-

* A phrase signifying that a smuggling vessel had delivered her cargo.

less struggle, he clutched the hand of the sinking girl. He bore her to the boat—they were lifted into it.

"Keep the helm, Ned," said he, addressing one of his comrades who had taken his place; "I must look after this poor girl—one of the seamen will take your oar." And she lay insensible, with her head upon his bosom, and his arm around her waist.

Consciousness returned before they reached the shore, and Harry had her conveyed to his mother's house. It is difficult for a sensitive girl of nineteen to look with indifference upon a man who has saved her life, and who risked his in doing so; and Eleanor Macdonald (for such was the name of the young governess) did not look with indifference upon Harry Teasdale. I might tell you how the shipwrecked party remained for five days at Embleton, and how, during that period, love rose in the heart of the young fisherman, and gratitude warmed into affection in the breast of Eleanor—how he discovered that she was an orphan, with no friend, save the education which her parents had conferred on her, and how he loved her the more, when he heard that she was friendless and alone in the world—how the tear was on his hardy cheek when they parted—how more than once he went many miles to visit her—and how Eleanor Macdonald, forsaking the refinements on the society of which she was a dependent, became the wife of the Northumbrian fisherman. But it is not of Harry's younger days that I am now about to write. Throughout sixteen happy years they lived together; and though, when the tempests blew and the storms raged, while his skiff was on the waves, she often shed tears for his sake, yet, though her education was superior to his, his conduct and conversation never raised a blush to her cheeks. Harry was also proud of his wife, and he shewed his pride, by spending every moment he could command at her side, by listening to her words, and gazing on her face with delight. But she died, leaving him an only daughter as the remembrancer of their loves; and to that daughter she had imparted all that she herself knew.

Besides his calling as a fisherman, and his adventures as a smuggler on sea, Harry also made frequent inland excursions. These were generally performed by night, across the wild moor, and by the most unfrequented paths. A strong black horse, remarkable for its swiftness of foot, was the constant companion of his midnight journeys. A canvass bag, fastened at both ends, and resembling a wallet, was invariably placed across the back of the animal, and at each end of the bag was a keg of brandy or Hollands, while the rider sat over these; and behind him was a large and rude portmanteau, containing packages of tea and tobacco. In his hand he carried a strong riding-whip, and in the breast pocket of his greatcoat two horse-pistols, always laden and ready for extremities. These journeys frequently required several days, or rather nights, for their performance; for he carried his contraband goods to towns fifty miles distant, and on both sides of the Border. The darker the night was, and the more tempestuous, the more welcome it was to Harry. He saw none of the beauties in the moon, on which poets dwell with admiration. Its light may have charms for the lover, but it has none for the smuggler. For twenty years he had carried on this mode of traffic with uninterrupted success. He had been frequently pursued; but his good steed, aided by his knowledge of localities, had ever carried him beyond the reach of danger; and his *stow-holes* had been so secretly and so cunningly designed, that no one but himself was able to discover them, and informations against him always fell to the ground.

Emboldened by long success, he had ceased to be a mere purchaser of contraband goods upon the sea, and the story became current that he had bought a share of a lugger, in conjunction with an Englishman then resident at Cuxhaven. His brother fishermen were not all men of honour; for you will find black sheep in every society, and amongst all ranks of life. Some of them had looked with an envious eye upon Harry's run of good fortune, and they bore it with impatience; but now, when he fairly, boldly, and proudly stepped out of their walk, and seemed to rise head and shoulders above them, it was more than they could stand. It was the lugger's first trip; and they, having managed to obtain intelligence of the day on which she was to sail with a rich cargo, gave information of the fact to the commander of a revenue cutter then cruising upon the coast.

I have mentioned that Harry was in the habit of wandering along the coast with a telescope under his arm. From the period of his wife's death, he had not gone regularly to sea, but let others have a share of his boats for a stipulated portion of the fish they caught. Now, it was about day-break, on a morning in the middle of September, that he was on the beach as I have described him, and perceiving the figure of the cutter on the water, he raised his glass to his eye, to examine it more minutely. He expected the lugger on the following night, and the cutter was an object of interest to Harry. As day began to brighten, he knelt down behind a sand bank, in order that he might take his observations, without the chance of being discovered; and while he yet knelt he perceived a boat pulled from the side of the cutter towards the shore. At the first glance, he descried it to be an Embleton coble, and before it proceeded far, he discovered to whom it belonged. He knew that the owner was his enemy, though he had not the courage openly to acknowledge it, and in a moment the nature of his errand to the cutter flashed through Harry's brain.

"I see it!—I see it all!" said the smuggler, dashing the telescope back into its case; "the low, the skulking coward, to go blab upon a neighbour! But I'se have the weather-gage o' both o' them, or my name's not Harry Teasdale."

So saying, he hastened home to his house—he examined his cutlass, his pistols, the bullets, and the powder. "All's right," said the smuggler, and he entered the room where his daughter slept. He laid his rough hand gently upon hers.

"Fanny, love," said he, "thou knowest that I expect the lugger to-night, and I don't think I shall be at home, and I may'nt be all to-morrow; but you won't fret—like a good girl, I know you won't. Keep all right, love, till I be back; and say nothing."

"Dear father," returned Fanny, who was now a lovely girl of eighteen, "I tremble for this life which we lead—as my poor mother said, it adds the punishment of the law to the dangers of the sea."

"Oh, don't mention thy mother, dearest!" said the smuggler, "or thou wilt make a child of thy father, when he should be thinking of other things. Ah, Fanny! when I lost thy mother I lost everything that gave delight to my heart. Since then, the fairest fields are to me no better than a bare moor, and I have only thee, my love—only my Fanny, to comfort me. So, thou wilt not cry now—thou wilt not distress thy father, wilt thou? No, no! I know thou wilt not. I shall be back to thee to-morrow, love."

More passed between the smuggler and his daughter—words of remonstrance, of tenderness, and assurance; and, when he had left her, he again went to the beach, to where his boat had just landed from the night's fishing. None of the other boats had yet arrived. As he appproached, the crew said they "saw by his face there was something unpleasant in the wind," and others added—

"Something's vexed Skipper Harry this morning, and, that's a shame, for a better soul never lived."

"Well, mates," said he, as he approached them, "have you seen a shark cruising off the coast this morning?"

"No," was the reply.

"But I have," said Harry, "though she is making off to keep out of sight now; and, more than that, I have seen a cut-throat lubber that I would not set my foot upon—I mean the old Beelzebub imp, with the white and yellow stripe

on his yawl, pull from her side. And what was he doing there? Was it not telling them to look out for the lugger?"

Some of the boat's crew uttered sudden and bitter imprecations. "Let us go and sink the old rascal before he reach the shore," said one.

"With all my heart," cried another—for they were all interested in the landing of the lugger, and, in the excitement of the moment, they wist not what they said.

"Softly, softly, my lads," returned Harry; "we must think now what we can do for the cargo and ourselves, and not of him."

"Right, master," replied another; "that is what I am thinking."

"Now, look ye," continued Harry, "I believe we shall have a squall before night, and a pretty sharp one too; but we mustn't mind that when our fortunes are at stake. Hang all black-hearted knaves that would peach on a neighbour, say I; but it is done in our case, and we must only do our best to make the rascal's story stick in his throat, or be the same as if it had; and I think it may be done yet. I know, but the peachers can't, that the lugger is to deliver a few score kegs at Blyth before she run down here. We must off and meet her, and give warning."

"Ay, ay, Master Teasdale, thou'rt right; but, now that the thing has got wind, the sharks will keep a hawk's eye on us, and how we are to do it, I can't see."

"Why, because thou'rt blind," said Harry.

"No, hang it, and if I be, master," replied the other; "I can see as far as most o' folks, as ye can testify; and I dow see plain enough, that if we put to sea now, we shall hae the cutter after us, and that would be what I call only leading the shark to where the salmon lay."

"Man, I wonder to hear thee," said Harry, "folk wad say thou hast nae mair gumption than a born fool. Do ye think I wad be such an ass as to send out spies in the face o' the enemy? Hae I had a run o' gud luck for twenty years, and yet ye think me nae better General than that comes to? I said, nae doubt, that we should gang to sea to meet the lugger, though there will be a squall, and a heavy one too, before night, as sure as I'm telling ye; but I didna say that we should dow sae under the bows o' the cutter, in our awn boat, or out o' Embleton."

"Right, right, master," said another, "no more you did—Ned isn't half awake." The name of the fisherman alluded to was Ned Thomson.

"Well, Ned, my lad," continued Harry, "I tell thee what must be done; I shall go saddle my old nag—get thou a horse from thy wife's father—he has two, and can spare one—and let us jog on as fast as we can for Blyth; but we mustn't keep by the coast, lest the King's folk get their eyes upon us. So away, get ready, lad, set out as quick as thee can—few are astir yet. I won't wait on thee, and thou won't wait on me; but whoever comes first to Felton Brig, shall just place two bits o' stones about the middle, on the parapet I think they ca' it; but it is the dyke on each side o' the brig I mean, ye knaw. Put them on the left hand side in gaun alang, down the water; or if they're there when ye come up, ye'll ken that I'm afore ye. So get ready, lad—quick as ever ye can. Tell the awd man naething about what ye want wi' the horse—the fewer that knaw onything about thir things the better. And ye, lads, will be upon the look-out; and, if we can get the lugger run in here, have a' thing in readiness."

"No fear o' that, master," said they.

"Well, sir," said Ned, "I'll be ready in a trap-stick, but I knaw the awd chap will kick up a sang about lendin' his horse."

"Tell him I'll pay for it if ye break its legs, said Harry.

The crew of the boat laughed, and some o. them said—"Nobody will doubt that, master—you are able enough to pay for it."

It must be observed that, since Harry had ceased to go regularly to sea, and when he was really considered to be a rich man, the crew of his boat began to call him *master* notwithstanding his sou'-wester and canvass kilt. And now that it was known to them, and currently rumoured in Embleton, that he was part proprietor of a lugger, many of the villagers began to call Fanny, Miss Teasdale; and it must be said that, in her dress and conversation, she much nearer approximated to one that might be styled *Miss*, than to a fisherman's daughter. But when the character and education of her mother are taken into account, this will not be wondered at.

It would be uninteresting to the reader to describe the journey of Harry and Ned Thomson to Blyth; before they arrived at Felton, Harry had overtaken Ned, and they rode on together.

On arriving at Blyth, they stopped at the door of an individual who was to receive forty kilderkins of Hollands from the lugger, and a quantity of tobacco. It is well known to be the first duty of an equestrian traveller to look after his horse, and to see that it is fed; but, in this instance, Harry forgot the established rule—the horses were given in charge of a girl to take them to a stable, to see them fed, or otherwise, and Harry hastened into the house, and breathlessly inquired of its owner—"I hope to heaven, sir, ye have heard nothing of the Swallow?"

[The lugger was called the "Swallow," from the carpenter in Cuxhaven, who built her, having warranted that she "would *fly* through the water."]

"Why, nothing," replied Harry's brother smuggler; "but we shall be on the look-out for her to-night."

"So far well," said Harry; "but I hope you have no fear of any King's lobsters being upon the coast, or rats ashore?"

"I don't think we have anything to fear from the cutters," said the other; "but I won't answer for the spies on shore; there are folk wi' us here, as weel as wi' ye, that canna see their neighbours thrive and haud their tongue; and I think some o' them hae been gaun ower often about wi' the spy-glass this day or two."

"Then," said Harry, "the lugger doesna break bulk here, nor at Embleton outher—that's flat. Get ye a boat ready, neighbour, and we maun off and meet her, or ye may drink sma' yill to your venture and mine."

"It is growing too stormy for a boat to venture out," answered the other.

"Smash, man!" rejoined Harry; "wad you sit here on your hunkers, while your capital is in danger o' being robbed frae ye as simply as ye would snuff out a candle, and a' to escape a night's doukin'! Get up man—get a boat—we maun to sea—we maun meet the lugger, or you and I are done men—clean ruined a'thegither. I hae risked the better part o' my bit Fanny's fortune upon this venture, and, Heaven! I'll suffer death ten thousandfold afore I see her brought to poverty; sae get a boat—get it—and if ye daurna gang out, and if nane o' your folk daur gang, Ned and me here will gang our tow sel's."

"Surely ye wad be mad, Harry, to attempt such a thing in an open boat to-night," said the Blyth merchant.

"Mad or no mad," answered Harry, "I hae said it, and I am determined. There is nae danger yet wi' a man that knaws how to manage a boat. If ye gang pullin' through thick and thin, through main strength, and for bare life, as many o' the folk upon our coast dee, then there is danger—but there is nae use for the like o that. It isna enough to manage an oar; you must knaw how to humour the sea, and to manage a wave. Dinna think I've been at sea mair than thirty years without knawing something about the matter. But I tell you what it is, friend—ye knaw what the Bible says—'The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong:' now, the way to face breakers, or a storm

at sea, is not to pull through desperation, as if your life depended on the pulling; but when you see a wave coming, ye must back-water and back-water, and not pull again until ye see an opportunity of gauin' forward. It is the trusting to mere pulling, sir, that makes our life-boats useless. The rowers in a life-boat should study the sea as well as their oars. They should consider that they save life by watching the wave that breaks over the vessel, as well as by straining every nerve to reach her. Now, this is a stormy night, nae doubt, but we maun just consider ourselves gaun off to the lugger in the situation o' folk gaun off in a life-boat. We maun work cannily and warily, and I'll take the management o' the boat mysel'."

"If ye dow that, master," said Ned Thomson, "then I gang wi' ye to a dead certainty."

"Well, Harry," replied the merchant, "if it maun be sae, it just maun be sae; but I think it a rash and a dangerous undertaking. I wad sooner risk a' that I have on board."

"Why, man, I really wonder to hear ye," said Harry; "folk wad say that ye had been swaddled in lambs' wool a' your life, and nursed on your mother's knee—get a boat, and let us off to the lugger, and nae mair about it."

His orders were obeyed—and, about an hour after sunset, himself, with Ned Thomson, the merchant, and four others, put off to sea. They had indeed embarked upon a perilous voyage—before they were a mile from the shore, the wind blew a perfect hurricane, and the waves chased each other in circles, like monsters at play. Still Harry guided the boat with unerring skill. He ordered them to draw back from the bursting wave—they rose over it—he rendered it subservient to his purpose. Within two hours he descried the lights of the lugger. He knew them, for he had given directions for their use, and similar lights were hoisted from the coble which he steered.

"All's well!" said Harry, and, in his momentary joy, he forgot the tempestuous sea in which they laboured. They reached the lugger—they gained the deck.

"Put back, friend—put back," was the first salutation of Harry to the skipper; "the camp is blown, and there are sharks along shore."

"The devil!" replied the captain, who was an Englishman; and what shall we do?"

"Back, back," answered Harry, "that is all in the meantime."

But the storm now raged with more fierceness—it was impossible for the boat to return to the shore, and Harry and his comrades were compelled to put to sea with the lugger. Even she became in danger, and it required the exertions of all hands to manage her.

The storm continued until near daybreak, and the vessel had plied many miles from the shore; but as day began to dawn, and the storm abated, an enemy that they feared more appeared within a quarter of a mile from them, in the shape of a cutter-brig. A gun was fired from the latter as a signal for the lugger to lie to. Consternation seized the crew, and they hurried to and fro upon the deck in confusion.

"Clear the decks!" cried the skipper; "they shan't get all without paying for it. Look to the guns, my hearties."

"Avast! Master Skipper," said Harry; "though my property be in danger, I see no cause why I should put my neck in danger too. It will be time enough to fight when we canna better dow; and if we can keep them in play a' day there will be sma' danger in wur gi'en them the slip at night."

"As you like, Mr. Teasdale," said the skipper; "all's one to me. Helm about, my lad," added he, addressing the steersman, and away went the lugger as an arrow, scudding before the wind.

The cutter made all sail, and gave chase, firing shot after shot. She was considered one of the fastest vessels in the service; and though, on the part of Harry and his friends, every nerve was strained, every sail hoisted, and every manœuvre used, they could not keep the lugger out of harm' way. Every half-hour he looked at his watch, and wished for night, and his friend, the skipper, followed his example. There was a hot chase for several hours; and though tubs of brandy were thrown overboard by the dozen still the whizzing bullets from the cutter passed over the heads of the smugglers. It ought to be mentioned, also, that the rigging of the lugger had early sustained damage, and her speed was checked. About sunset a shot injured her rudder, and she became, for a time, as Harry described her. "as helpless as a child." The cutter instantly bore down upon her.

"Now for it, my lads," cried the skipper—"there is nothing for it but fighting now—I suppose that is what you mean, Master Teasdale?"

Harry nodded his head, and quietly drew his pistols from the breast-pocket of his greatcoat; and then added—

"Now, lads, this is a bad job, but we must try to make the best on't, and, as we hae gone thus far," (and he discharged a pistol at the cutter as he spoke,) "ye knaw it is o' nae use to think o' yielding—it is better to be shot than hanged. In a few minutes the firing of the cutter was returned by the lugger, from two large guns and a number of small arms. Harry, in the midst of the smoke and flame of the action, and the havoc of the bullets, was as cool and collected as if smoking his pipe upon the beach at Embleton.

"See to get the helm repaired, lad, as fast as ye can," said he to the carpenter, while in the act of reloading his pistols; "let us fight away, but mind ye your awn wark."

Harry's was the philosophy of courage, mingled with the calculations of worldly wisdom.

The firing had been kept up on both sides for the space of half an hour, and the decks of both were stained with the blood of the wounded, when a party from the brig, headed by her first mate, succeeded in boarding the lugger. Harry seized a cutlass, which lay unsheathed by the side of the companion, and was the first who rushed forward to repel them.

"Out o' my ship, ye thieves!" cried he, while, with his long arm, he brandished the deadly weapon, and, for a moment, forgot his habitual discretion. Others of the crew instantly sprang to the assistance of Harry, and, after a short, but desperate encounter, the invaders were driven from the deck, leaving their chief mate, insensible from wounds, behind them.

The rudder being repaired, so as to render her manageable, the lugger kept up a sort of retreating fight until night set in, when, as Harry said, "she gave the cutter the slip like a knotless thread."

But now a disagreeable question arose amongst them, and that was, what they should do with the wounded officer, who had been left as a prize in their hands—though a prize that they would much rather have been without. Some wished that he might die of his wounds, and so they would get rid of him, for they were puzzled how to dispose of him in such a way as not to lead to their detection, and place their lives in jeopardy. Harry was on his knees by the side of the officer, washing his wounds with Riga balsam, of which they had a store on board, and binding them up, when one desperate fellow cut short the perplexity and discussion of the crew, by proposing to fling their *prize* over board.

On hearing the brutal proposal, Harry sprang to his feet, and hurling out his long bony arm, he exclaimed—"Ye savage!" and, dashing his fist in the face of the ruffian, felled him to the deck.

The man (if we may call one who could entertain so inhuman an idea by the name of man) rose, bleeding, growling, and muttering threats of revenge.

"Ye'll blab, will ye?" said Harry, eyeing him fiercely—"threaten to dow it again, and there's the portion that's waiting for yur neck!"—and, as he spoke, he pointed with his finger to the cross-tree of the lugger, and added, "and ye knaw that the same reward awaits ye if ye set yur weel faur'd face ashore!—Out o' my sight, ye 'scape-the-gallows'

For three days and nights, after her encounter with the brig, the lugger kept out to sea; and, on the fourth night, which was thick, dark, and starless, Harry resolved to risk all; and, desiring the skipper to stand for the shore, all but run her aground on Embleton beach. No light was hoisted, no signal given. Harry held up his finger, and every soul in the lugger was mute as death. A boat was lowered in silence, and four of the crew being placed under the command of Ned Thomson, pulled ashore. The boat flew quickly, but the oars seemed only to kiss the water, and no sound, audible at the distance of five yards, proceeded from their stroke.

"Now, pull back quietly, mates," said Ned, "and I'll be aboard wi' some o' wur awn folks in a twinkling."

It was between one and two in the morning, and there was no outward sign amongst the fishermen of Embleton that they were on the alert for the arrival of a smuggler. The party who gave information to the cutter having missed Harry for a few days, justly imagined that he had obtained notice of what they had done; and also believed that he had ordered the cargo to be delivered on some other part of the coast, and they, therefore, were off their guard. Ned, therefore, proceeded to the village; and, at the houses of certain friends, merely gave three distinct and peculiar taps with his finger upon their shutterless windows, from none of which, if I may use the expression, proceeded even the *shadow* of light; but no sooner was the last tap given upon each, than it was responded to by a low cough from within. No words passed; and at one window only was Ned detained for a space exceeding ten seconds, and that was at the house of his master, Harry Teasdale. Fanny had slept but little since her father left; when she sought rest for an hour, it was during the day, and she now sat anxiously watching every sound. On hearing the understood signal, she sprang to the door. "Edward!" she whispered eagerly, "is it you?—where is my father?—what has detained him?"

"Don't be asking questions now, Miss Fanny—sure it is very foolish," replied Ned, in the same tone; "Master will be here by and by; but ye knaw we have bonny wark to dow afore daylight yet. Gud night, hinny."

So saying, Ned stole softly along the village; and, within half an hour, half a dozen boats were along-side the lugger; and, an hour before daybreak, every tub and every bale on board was safely landed and stowed away.

Yet, after she was a clean ship, there was one awkward business that still remained to be settled, and that was how they were to dispose of the wounded officer of the cutter-brig. A consultation was held—many opinions were given.

"At ony rate we must act like Christians," said Harry.

Some proposed that he should be taken over to Holland and landed there; but this the skipper positively refused to do, swearing that the sooner he could get rid of such a customer the better.

"Why, I canna tell," said Ned Thomson; "but what dow ye say, if we just take him ashore, and lay him at the door o' the awd rascal that gied information on us?"

"Capital!" cried two or three of the conclave; "that's just the ticket, Ned!"

"Nonsense!" interrupted Harry, "it's nae such thing. Man, Ned, I wonder that sic a clever chap as ye aye talks like a fool. Why ye might as weel go and ask them to take you and me off to Morpeth before dinner-time, as to lay him at their door this morning."

"Well, Master Teasdale," said the skipper, who was becoming impatient, "what would you have us to do with him?"

"Why, I see there's naething for it," answered Harry, "but I maun take the burden o' him upon my awn shouthers. Get the boat ready." So saying, and while it was yet dark, he entered the cabin where the wounded officer lay, but who was now conscious of his situation.

"I say, my canny lad," said Harry, approaching his bedside, and addressing him, "ye maun allow me to tie a bit handkercher ower yur een for a quarter of an hour or sae.—Ye needna be feared, for there's naething shall happen ye—but only, in looking after yur gud, I maunna lose sight o' my awn. You shall be ta'en ashore as gently as we can."

The wounded man was too feeble to offer any resistance, and Harry, binding up his eyes, wrapt the clothes on the bed around him, and carried him in his arms upon deck. In the same manner he placed him in the boat, supporting him with his arm, and, on reaching the shore, he bore him on his shoulders to his house.

"Now, Sir," said he, as he set him down from his shoulders on an arm-chair, "ye needna be under the smallest apprehension, for every attention shall be paid ye here; and, as soon as ye are better, ye shall be at liberty to return, safe and sound, to your friends, your ship, or wherever ye like." Harry then turned to his daughter, and continued—"Now, my bird, come awa in by wi' me, and I will let ye knaw what ye have to dow."

Fanny wondered at the unusual burden which her father had brought upon his shoulders into the house; and, at his request she anxiously accompanied him into her own apartment. When they had entered, and he had shut the door behind them, he took her hand affectionately, and, addressing her in a sort of whisper, said—

"Now, Fanny, love, ye maun be very cautious—as I knaw ye will be—and mind what I am telling ye to dow." He then made her acquainted with the rank of their inmate, and the manner in which he had fallen into their hands, and added—"Now, darling, ye see we maun be very circumspect, and keep his being here a secret frae everybody; he maun remain ignorant o' his awn situation, nowther knawing where he is, nor in whose hands he is; for if it were found out, it wad be as much as your father's life is worth. Now he maun stop in this room, as it looks into the garden, and he can see naething frae it, nor will onybody be able to see him. Ye maun sleep wi' the lass in the kitchen, and yur '*sampler*,' and every book, or onything that has a name on't, maun be taken out o' the room. It winna dow for onybody but you and me ever to see him, or to wait on him; and, when we dow, he maunna be allowed to see either yur face or mine; but I will put my awd mask on, that I used to wear at night sometimes when there was onything particular to dow, and I thought there wad be danger in the way; and," continued he, as the doting parent rose in his bosom, "it wadna be *chancy* for him to see my Fanny's face at ony rate; and when ye dow see him, ye maun have your features so concealed, that, if he met you again, he wadna knaw ye. Now, hinny, ye'll attend to a' that I've said—for ye remember your father's life depends on it—and we maun be as kind to the lad as we can, and try to bring him about as soon as possible, to get clear on him."

Fanny promised to obey her father's injunctions; but fears for his safety, and the danger in which he was placed, banished every other thought. The books, the "*sampler*," everything that could lead the stranger to a knowledge of the name of his keepers, or of the place where he was, was taken out of the room.

Harry, muffling up his face, returned to the apartment where the wounded man was, and, supporting him on his arm, he led him to that which he was to occupy. He then took the bandage from his eyes, and, placing him on the bed, again desired him to keep himself easy, and wished him "good morning," for day was now beginning to dawn.

The name of our smuggler's wounded prisoner was Augustus Hartley. He was about twenty-four years of age, and the son of a gentleman of considerable property in Devonshire; and, at the period we speak of, he was in expectation of being removed from his situation as second officer of the

orig, and promoted to the command of a revenue cutter. The wounds which he had received on the deck of the lugger were severe, and had reduced him to a state of extreme feebleness; but they were not dangerous. He knew not where he was, and he marvelled at the treatment he experienced; for it was kind, yea, even roughly courteous, and unlike what he might have expected from the hands of such men as those into whose power he had fallen. Anxiety banished sleep; and when the risen sun lighted up the chamber where he lay, he stretched forth his hand and drew aside the curtains, to ascertain whether the appearance of the apartment would in any way reveal the mystery which surrounded his situation. But it rather increased it. In the window were the flowers — around the walls the curious needle-work; the furniture was neatly arranged—there was an elegance over all; and, to increase his wonder, in a corner by the window, was a small harp, and a few pages of music lay upon a table near him.

"Surely," thought Augustus, "this cannot be the habitation of a half uncivilized smuggler; and yet the man who brought me here seemed such."

He drew back his head upon his pillow, to seek the explanation in conjectures which he could not otherwise obtain; and while he lay conjuring up strange fancies, Harry, with the mask upon his face, his hair tied up and concealed, and his body wrapt in a greatcoat, entered the room.

"Well, how art thou now, lad?" said the smuggler, approaching the bed; "dost think ye could take breakfast yet?"

Augustus thanked him; but the appearance of Harry in his strange disguise increased his curiosity and anxiety.

Harry withdrew, and again returned with the breakfast; and though an awkward waiter, he was an attentive one. Few words passed between them, for the questions which Augustus felt desirous to ask, were checked by the smuggler, saying—"Now, my canny lad, while ye are here I maun lay an embargo on your asking ony questions, either at me or onybody else. Ye shall be taken gud care on—if ye want onything, just tak that bit stick at your bed-side, and gi'e a rap on the floor, and I'll come to ye. Ye shall want for naething; and, as soon as ye are better, ye shall be at liberty to gang where ye like. But I maun caution ye again, that ye are to ask nae questions."

Augustus again thanked him, and was silent.

At the end of eight days, he was able to rise from his bed, and to sit up for a few hours. Harry now said to him—

"As thou wilt be dull, belike thou wilt have nae objections to a little music to cheer thee."

Thus saying, he left the room, and, in a few minutes, returned with Fanny. He was disguised as before, and her features were concealed by several folds of black crape, which covered her head and face, after the fashion of a nun. She curtsied with a modest grace to the stranger as she entered.

"That cannot be the daughter of a rude and ignorant smuggler," thought Augustus; "and how should such a creature be connected with them?" He noted the elegance of her form, and his imagination again began to dream. The mystery of his situation deepened around him, and he gazed anxiously on the thick and folded veil that concealed her features.

"Wilt thou amuse the poor gentleman with a song, love," said Harry, "for I fear he has but a dull time on't?"

Fanny took the harp which stood in the corner — she touched the trembling chords—she commenced a Scottish melody; and, as Augustus listened to the music of her clear and silvery voice, blending with the tones of the instrument, it

> "Came o'er the ear like the sweet south
> Breathing upon a bank of violets,
> Stealing and giving odour.

It seemed the sweetest strain to which he had ever listened; and romance and mystery lent it their magic. His eyes kindled at the sounds; and when Harry saw the change that was produced on him he was well pleased to observe it, and he was proud also of his daughter's performance, and in the simplicity and fulness of his heart, he said—

"Thou mayest amuse the gentleman with thy music every day, child, or thou mayest read to him, to make him as comfortable as we can; only he must ask thee no questions, and thou must answer him none. But I can trust to thee."

From that moment Augustus no longer wearied for the days of his captivity to pass away; and he retired to rest, or rather to dream of the veiled songstress, and to conjure up a thousand faces of youth and beauty which might be like her face—for he doubted not but her countenance was lovely as her form was handsome; and he pictured dark eyes where the soul beamed, and the raven hair waved on the snowy temples, with the soft blue eyes where affection smiled, and the flaxen tresses were parted on the brow; but he knew not which might be like hers on whom his imagination dwelt.

Many days passed; and, during a part of each, Fanny sat beside him to beguile his solitude. She read to him; they conversed together; and the words which fell from her lips surprised and delighted him. She also taught him the use of the harp, and he was enabled to play a few tunes. He regarded her as a veiled angel, and his desire to look upon her features each day became more difficult to control. He argued, that it was impossible to love one whose face he had never seen—yet, when she was absent from his side, he was unhappy until her return; she had become the one idea of his thoughts—the spirit of his fancies; he watched her fair fingers as they glided on the harp—his hand shook when he touched them, and more than once he half raised it to untie the thick veil which hid her features from him.

But while such feelings passed through his mind, others of a kindred character had crept into the bosom of Fanny, and she sighed when she thought that, in a few weeks, she would see him no more, that even her face he might not see, and that her name he must never know; and fears for her father's safety mingled with the feelings which the stranger had awakened in her bosom. She had beheld the anxiety that glowed in his dark eyes—she had listened to his impassioned words—she felt their influence; but duty forbade her to acknowledge that she felt it.

Eight weeks had passed; the wounds of Augustus were nearly healed; his health was restored, and his strength returned, and Harry said that in another week he might depart; but the announcement gave no joy to him to whom it was addressed. His confinement had been robbed of its solitariness, it had become as a dream in which he delighted, and he could have asked but permission to gaze upon the face of his companion to endure it for ever. About an hour after he received this intelligence, Fanny entered the apartment. He rose to meet her—he took her hand, and they sat down together. But her harp lay untouched—she spoke little—he thought she sighed, and he, too, was silent.

"Lady," said he, anxiously, still holding her hand in his, "I know not where I am, nor by whom I am surrounded—this only I know, that you, with an angel's care, have watched over me, that you have restored me to health, and rendered confinement more grateful than liberty; but, in a few days, we must part—part, perhaps, for ever; then, before I go, grant me but one request—let me look upon the face of her whose remembrance will dwell in my heart as its dearest thought, while the pulse of life throbs within it."

"I must not, I dare not," said Fanny, and she paused and sighed—"'tis not worth looking on," she added.

"Nay, dearest," continued he, "deny me not—it is a small request. Fear nothing—never shall danger fall upon any connected with you through me. I will swear to you"———

"Swear not!" interrupted Fanny—"I dare not!—no!—no!" and she again sighed.

He pressed her hand more closely within his. A breathless silence followed, and a tear glistened in his eyes. Her bosom heaved—her countenance bespoke the struggle that warred in her breast.

"Do I look as one who would betray your friends—if they be your friends?" said he, with emotion.

"No," she faltered, and her head fell on her bosom.

He placed his hand across her shoulders—it touched the ribbon by which the deep folds of the veil were fastened over her head—it was the impulse of a moment—he unloosed it, the veil fell upon the floor, and the flaxen locks and the lovely features of Fanny Teasdale were revealed. Augustus started in admiration; for weeks he had conjured up phantoms of ideal beauty, but the fair face before him exceeded them all. She blushed—her countenance bespoke anxiety rather than anger—tears fell down her cheeks, and he kissed them away. He sat, silently gazing on her features, drawing happiness from her eyes.

Again ten days had passed, and, during each of them, Fanny, in the absence of her father, sat unveiled by his side. Still he knew not her name, and, when he entreated her to pronounce it, she wept, and replied, "I dare not."

He had told her his. "Call me *your* Augustus," said he, "and tell me by what name I shall call *you*, my own. Come, dearest, do you doubt me still? Do you still think me capable of the part of an informer?"

But she wept the more, for she knew that to tell her name was to make known her father's also—to betray him, and to place his life in jeopardy. He urged her yet more earnestly, and he had sunk upon his knee, and was pressing her hand to his lips, when Harry, in the disguise in which he had always seen him, entered the room. The smuggler started back.

"What!"cried he sternly, what hast thou done, girl?—shewn thy face and betrayed me?—and told thy name, and mine too, I suppose?"

"O no! no! dear father!" she exclaimed, flinging her arms around him; "I have not—indeed I have not. Do not be angry with your Fanny.

"Fanny!" hastily exclaimed Augustus—"Fanny!—bless thee for that word!"

"That thou mayest make 't a clew to destroy her father!" returned the smuggler.

"No, Sir," answered Augustus, proudly, "but that I may treasure it up in my heart, as the name of one who is dearer to me than the life which thou hast preserved."

"Ay! ay!" replied Harry, "thou talkest like every hot-headed youth; but it was an ungrateful return in thee, for preserving thy life, to destroy my peace. Get thee ben to the other room, Fanny, for thou'st been a silly girl."

She rose weeping, and withdrew.

"Now, Sir," continued Harry, "thou must remain nae langer under this roof. This very hour will I get a horse ready, and conduct thee to where ye can go to your friends, or wherever ye like; and as ye were brought blindfolded here, ye maun consent to be taken blindfolded away."

"Nay, trust to my honour, Sir," said Augustus—"I am incapable of betraying you."

"I'm no sae sure about that," returned the smuggler, "and it's best to be sure. I trusted to your honour that ye wad ask no questions while here—and how have you kept your honour? Na, lad, na!—what ye dinna see ye winna be able to swear to. So make ready." Thus saying, Harry left the apartment, locking the door behind him.

It was about an hour after nightfall, and within ten minutes the smuggler again entered the room. He carried a pistol in one hand, and a silk handkerchief in the other. He placed the pistol upon the table, and said—"I have no time to argue—allow me to tie thy eyes up, lest worse follow."

Augustus requested that he might see Fanny but for a few minutes, nd he would comply without a murmur.

"No!" said Harry, sternly; "wouldst tamper with my child's heart, when her trusting in thee would place my life in thy power? Say no more—I won't hear thee," he continued, again raising the pistol in his hand.

Augustus, finding expostulation vain, submitted to have his eyes bound up; and as the smuggler was leading him from the house, the bitter sobs of Fanny reached his ear: he was almost tempted to burst from the grasp of his conductor and rush towards her; but, endeavouring to suppress the tumult of his feelings, he exclaimed aloud—

"Forget me not, dear Fanny!—we shall meet again."

"Never!" whispered Harry in his ear.

The smuggler's horse stood ready at the door. In a moment he sprang upon the saddle—(if saddle it could be called)—and, taking Augustus by the hand, placed him behind him; and, at a word spoken, the well-trained animal started off, as though spurs had been dashed into its sides. For several hours they galloped on, but in what direction Augustus knew not, nor wist he from whence he had been brought. At length the smuggler suddenly drew up his horse, and exclaimed—"Dismount!"

Augustus obeyed, but scarce had his feet touched the ground, when Harry, crying "Farewell!" dashed away as an arrow shot from a bow; and before the other could unfasten the handerchief with which his eyes were bound up, the horse and its rider were invisible.

It was drawing towards gray dawn, and he knew neither where he was nor in what direction to proceed. He remembered also that he was without money—but there was something heavy tied in a corner of the handerchief, which he yet held in his hand. He examined it, and found ten guineas, wrapt in a scrap of paper, on which some words seemed to be written. He longed for day, that he might be enabled to read them, and, as the light increased, he deciphered, written with a trembling hand—

"You may need money.—Think sometimes of me!"

"Heaven bless thee, my unknown Fanny!" cried he, "whoever thou art—never will I think of any but thee."

I need not tell about his discovering in what part of the country the smuggler had left him, of his journey to his father's house in Devonshire, or his relation of what had befallen him, nor how he dwelt upon the remembrance of Fanny, and vainly endeavoured to trace where her residence was, or to discover what was her name beyond Fanny.

He was appointed to the command of a cutter, and four years passed from the period of the scenes that had been described, when, following in pursuit of a smuggling vessel, he again arrived upon the coast of Northumberland. Some of his crew, who had been on shore, brought him information that the vessel was delivering her cargo near Embleton, and, ordering two boats to be manned, he instantly proceeded to the land. They came upon the smuggler—a scuffle ensued, and one of Captain Hartley's men was stabbed by his side with a clasp-knife, and fell dead at his feet; and he wrenched the knife from the hand of the murderer, who, with his companions, effected his escape without being discovered.

But day had not yet broken when two constables knocked at the door of Harry Teasdale, and demanded admission. The servant-girl opened the door—they rushed into the house, and to the side of the bed where he slept. They grasped him by the shoulder, and exclaimed—

"You are our prisoner!"

"Your prisoner!" replied Harry; "for what, neighbours?"

"Weel dow ye knaw for what," was the answer.

Harry sprang upon the floor, and, in the excitement of the moment, he raised his hand to strike the officers of the law.

"Ye are only making things worse," said one of them; and he submitted to have handcuffs placed upon his wrists.

Fanny sprang into the room, exclaiming—

"My father!—my father!" and flinging her arms around his neck—"Oh! what is it?—what is it?" she continued,

breathless, and her voice choked with sobbing—"what do they say that you have done?"

"Nothing, love, nothing," said he, endeavouring to be calm—"it is some mistake, but some one shall answer for it."

His daughter's arms were forcibly torn from around his neck; and he was taken before a neighbouring magistrate, by whom the deposition of Captain Hartley had been received. Harry was that morning committed to the county prison on a charge of murder. I shall neither attempt to describe his feelings, nor will I dwell upon the agony which was worse than death to his poor daughter. She knew her father innocent; but she knew not his accusers, nor the nature of the evidence which they would bring forward to prove him guilty of the crime which they imputed to him.

But the fearful day of trial came. Harry Teasdale was placed at the bar. The principal witness against him was Captain Hartley. The colour came and went upon the prisoner's cheeks as his eye fell upon the face of his accuser. He seemed struggling with sudden emotion; and many who observed it, took it as a testimony of guilt. In his evidence Captain Hartley deposed that he and a part of his crew came upon the smugglers on the beach, while in the act of concealing their goods; that he and the seamen, who was murdered by his side, having attacked three of the smugglers, the tallest of the three, whom he believed to be the prisoner, with a knife, gave the mortal stab to the deceased—that he raised the weapon also against him, and that he only escaped the fate of his companion by striking down the arm of the smuggler, and wrenching the knife from his hands, who then escaped. He also stated that, on examining the knife, which was of great length, he read the words, "HARRY TEASDALE," which were deeply burned into its bone handle, and which led to the apprehension of the prisoner. The knife was then produced in court, and a murmur of horror ran through the multitude.

Other witnesses were examined, who proved that, on the day of the murder, they had seen the knife in the hands of the prisoner; and the counsel for the prosecution, in remarking on the evidence, pronounced it to be

"Confirmation strong as holy writ!"

The judge inquired of the prisoner if he had anything to say, or aught to bring forward in his defence.

"I have only this to say, my Lord," said Harry, firmly, "that I am as innocent o' the crime laid to my charge as the child unborn. My poor daughter and my servant can prove, that on the night when the deed was committed, I never was across my own door. And," added he, firmly, and in a louder tone, and pointing to Captain Hartley as he spoke, "I can only say that he whose life I saved at the peril o' my own, has, through some mistake, endeavoured to take away mine; and his conscience will carry its punishment when he discovers his error."

Captain Hartley started to his feet—his cheeks became pale—he inquired in an eager tone—"Have you seen me before?" The prisoner returned no answer; and, at that moment the officer of the court called the name of

"*Fanny Teasdale!*"

"Ha!" exclaimed the captain, convulsively, and suddenly striking his hand upon his breast—"Is it so!"

The prisoner bowed his head and wept. The court were stricken with astonishment.

Fanny was led towards the witness-box—there was a buzz of admiration and of pity as she passed along. Captain Hartley beheld her—he clasped his hands together—"Gracious Heavens! my own Fanny!" he exclaimed aloud.

He sprang forward—he stood by her side—her head fell on his bosom. "My lord!—O my lord!" he cried wildly, addressing the judge, "I doubt—I disbelieve my own evidence! There must be some mistake. I cannot be the murderer of the man who saved me—of my Fanny's father!"

The most anxious excitement prevailed through the Court every individual was moved, and, on the bench, faces were turned aside to conceal a tear.

The judge endeavoured to restore order.

The shock of meeting with Augustus, in such a place and in such an hour, though she knew not that he was her father's accuser, added to her agony, was too much for Fanny, and, in a state of insensibility, she was carried out of the court.

Harry's servant girl was examined; and, although she swore that, on the night on which the murder was committed, he had not been out of his own house, yet, in her cross-examination, she admitted that he frequently was out during the night without her knowledge, and that he *might* have been so on the night in question. Other witnesses were called, who spoke to the excellent character of the prisoner, and to his often-proved courage and humanity; but they could not prove that he had not been engaged in the affray in which the murder had been committed.

Captain Hartley strove anxiously to undo the impression which his evidence had already produced; but it was too late.

The judge addressed the jury, and began to sum up the evidence. He remarked upon the knife with which the deed was perpetrated, being proved and acknowledged to be the property of the prisoner—of its being seen in his hand on the same day, and of his admitting the fact—on the resemblance of the figure to that of the individual who was seen to strike the blow, and on his inability to prove that he was not that individual. He was proceeding to notice the singular scene that had occurred, with regard to the principal witness and the prisoner, when a shout was heard from the court door, and a gentleman, dressed as a clergyman, pressed through the crowd, and, reaching the side of the prisoner, he exclaimed—"My lord, and gentlemen of the jury, *the prisoner, Harry Teasdale, is innocent!*"

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Captain Hartley.

The spectators burst into a shout, which the judge instantly suppressed, and desired the clergyman to be sworn, and to produce his evidence. "We are here to give it," said two others who had followed behind them.

The clergyman briefly stated that he had been sent for on the previous evening to attend the deathbed of an individual whom he named, and who had been wounded in the affray with Captain Hartley's crew, and that, in his presence, and in the presence of the other witnesses who then stood by his side, a deposition had been taken down from his lips an hour before his death. The deposition, or confession, was handed into court; and it set forth that his hand struck the fatal blow, and with Harry Teasdale's knife, which he had found lying upon the stern of his boat on the afternoon of the day on which the deed was committed—and, farther, that Harry was not upon the beach that night.

The jury looked for a moment at each other—they instantly rose, and their foreman pronounced the prisoner, "*Not Guilty!*" A loud and spontaneous shout burst from the multitude. Captain Hartley sprang forward—he grasped his hand.

"I forgive thee, lad," said Harry.

Hartley led him from the dock—he conducted him to Fanny, whom he had taken to an adjoining inn.

"Here is your father!—he is safe!—he is safe, my love!" cried Augustus, as he entered the room where she was.

Fanny wept on her father's bosom, and he kissed her brow, and said, "Bless thee."

"And canst thou bless me, too," said Augustus, "after all that I have done?" "Well, well, I see how it is to be," said Harry; and he took their hands and placed them in each other. I need only add, that Fanny Teasdale became the happy wife of Augustus Hartley; and Harry, having acquired a competency, gave up the trade of a smuggler.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE DOMINIE'S CLASS.*

"Their ends as various as the roads they take
In journeying through life."

THERE is no class of men to whom the memory turns with more complacency, or more frequently, than to those who "taught the young idea how to shoot." There may be a few tyrants of the birch, who never inspired a feeling save fear or hatred; yet their number is but few, and I would say that the schoolmaster *is abroad* in more senses than that in which it is popularly applied. He is abroad in the memory and in the affections of his pupils; and his remembrance is cherished wheresoever they may be. For my own part, I never met with a teacher whom I did not love when a boy, and reverence when a man; from him before whom I used to stand and endeavour to read my task in his eyes, as he held the book before his face, and the page was reflected in his spectacles—and from his spectacles I spelled my *qu*—to him, who, as an elder friend, bestowed on me my last lesson. When a man has been absent from the place of his nativity for years, and when he returns and grasps the hands of his surviving kindred, one of his first questions to them (after family questions are settled) is—"Is Mr ——, my old schoolmaster, yet alive?" And, if the answer be in the affirmative, one of the first on whom he calls is the dominie of his boyhood; and he enters the well-remembered school—and his first glance is to the seat he last occupied—as an urchin opens the door and admits him, as he gently taps at it, and cries to the master, (who is engaged with a class,) when the stranger enters—

"Sir, here's one wants you."

Then steps forward the man of letters, looking anxiously—gazing as though he had a right to gaze in the stranger's face; and, throwing out his head, and particularly his chin, while he utters the hesitating interrogative—"Sir?" And the stranger replies—"You don't know me, I suppose? I am such-an-one, who was at your school at such a time." The instiller of knowledge starts—

"What!" cries he, shifting his spectacles, "you Johnnie (Thomas, or Peter, as the case may be) So-and-so?—it's not possible! O man, I'm glad to see ye! Ye'll mak me an auld man, whether I will or no. And how hae ye been, an' where hae ye been?"—And, as he speaks, he flings his tawse over to the corner where his desk stands. The young stranger still cordially shakes his hand, a few kindly words pass between them, and the teacher, turning to his scholars, says—"You may put by your books and slates, and go for the day;" when an instantaneous movement takes place through the school; there is a closing of books, a clanking of slates, a pocketing of pencils, a clutching for hats, caps, and bonnets—a springing over seats, and a falling of seats—a rushing to the door, and a shouting when at the door—a "*hurra for play!*"—and the stranger seems to have made a hundred happy, while the teacher and he retire, to

"Drink a cup o' kindness
For auld langsyne."

But to proceed with our story of stories. There was a Dr Montgomery, a native of Annan, who, after he had been for more than twenty years a physician in India, where he had become rich, visited his early home, which was also the grave of his fathers. There were but few of his relations in life when he returned—(for death makes sad havoc in families in twenty years)—but, after he had seen them, he inquired if his old teacher, Mr Grierson, yet lived?—and being answered in the affirmative, the doctor proceeded to the residence of his first instructor. He found him occupying the same apartments in which he resided thirty years before, and which were situated on the south side of the main street, near the bridge.

When the first congratulations—the shaking of hands and the expressions of surprise—had been got over, the doctor invited the dominie to dinner; and, after the cloth was withdrawn, and the better part of a bottle of Port had vanished between them, the man of medicine thus addressed his ancient preceptor:—

"Can you inform me, sir, what has become of my old class-fellows?—who of them are yet in the land of the living?—who have caught the face of fortune as she smiled, or been rendered the 'sport o' her slippery ba'?' Of the fate of one of them I know something, and to me their history would be more interesting than a romance."

"Do ye remember the names that ye used to gie ane anither?" inquired the man of letters, with a look of importance, which shewed that the history of the whole class was forthcoming.

"I remember them well," replied the doctor; "there were seven of us: Solitary Sandy—Glaikit Willie—Venturesome Jamie—Cautious Watty—Leein' Peter—Jock the Dunce—and myself."

"And hae ye forgot the lounderings that I used to gie ye, for ca'in' ane anither such names?" inquired Mr Grierson, with a smile.

"I remember you were displeased at it," replied the other.

"Weel, doctor," continued the teacher, "I believe I can gratify your curiosity, an' I am not sure but you'll find that the history of your class-fellows is not without interest. The career of some of them has been to me as a recompense for all the pains I bestowed on them, an' that o' others has been a source o' grief. Wi' some I hae been disappointed,

* This tale has been written from the circumstance of *The Tales of the Borders* having already been adopted as a lesson-book in several schools.

wi' ithers surprised; but you'll allow that I did my utmost to fleech and to thrash your besetting sins out o' ye a'. I will first inform ye what I know respecting the history of Alexander Rutherford, whom all o' ye used to ca' Solitary Sandy, because he wasna a hempy like yoursels. Now, sir, hearken to the history of

SOLITARY SANDY

I remarked that Sandy was an extraordinary callant, and that he would turn out a character that would be heard tell o' in the world; though that he would ever rise in it, as some term it, or become rich in it, I did not believe. I dinna think that e'er I had to raise the tawse to Sandy in my life. He had always his task as ready by heart as he could count his fingers. Ye ne'er saw Sandy looking over his book, or nodding wi' it before his face. He and his lessons were like twa acquaintances—fond o' each other's company. I hae observed frae the window, when the rest o' ye would hae been driving at the hand-ba', cleeshin' your peerie-taps, or endangerin' your legs wi' the duck-stane, Sandy wad been sitting on his hunkers in the garden, looking as earnestly on a daisy or ony bit flower, as if the twa creatures could hae held a crack wi' ane anither, and the bonny leaves o' the wee silent things whispered to Sandy how they got their colours, how they peeped forth to meet the kiss o' spring, and how the same Power that created the lowly daisy called man into existence, and fashioned the bright sun and the glorious firmament. He was once dux, and aye dux. From the first moment he got to the head o' the class, there he remained as immovable as a mountain. There was nae trapping him; for his memory was like clock-wark. I canna say that he had a great turn for mathematics; but ye will remember, as weel as me, that he was a great Grecian; and he had screeds o' Virgil as ready aff by heart as the twenty-third psalm. Mony a time hae I said concerning him, in the words o' Butler—

> 'Latin to him's no more difficil,
> Than for a blackbird 'tis to whistle.'

The classics, indeed, were his particular hobby; and, though I was proud o' Sandy, I often wished that I could direct his bent to studies o' greater practical utility. His exercises shewed that he had an evident genius for poetry, and that o' a very high order; but his parents were poor, and I didna see what poetry was to put in his pocket. I, therefore, by no means encouraged him to follow out what I conceived to be a profitless though a pleasing propensity; but, on the contrary, when I had an opportunity o' speakin' to him by himsel, I used to say to him—

'Alexander, ye have a happy turn for versification, and there is both boldness and originality about your ideas—though no doubt they would require a great deal of pruning before they could appear in a respectable shape before the world. But you must not indulge in verse-writing. When you do it, let it only be for an exercise, or for amusement when you have nothing better to do. It may make rhyme jingle in your ears, but it will never make sterling coin jink in your pockets. Even the immortal Homer had to sing his own verses about the streets; and ye have heard the epigram—

> 'Seven cities now contend for *Homer dead*,
> Through which the *living Homer* begged his bread.'

Boethius, like Savage in our own days, died in a prison; Terence was a slave, and Plautus did the work of a horse. Cervantes perished for lack of food, on the same day that our great Shakspeare died; but Shakspeare had worldly wisdom as well as heavenly genius. Camoens died in an alms-house. The magical Spenser was a supplicant at Court for years for a paltry pension, till hope deferred made his heart sick, and he vented his disappointment in these words—

> I was promised, on a time,
> To have reason for my rhyme:
> From that time unto this season,
> I received not rhyme nor reason.'

Butler asked for bread, and they gave him a stone. Dryden lived between the hand and the mouth. Poor Otway perished through penury; and Chatterton, the inspired boy, terminated his wretchedness with a pennyworth of poison. But there is a more striking example than these, Sandy. It was but the other day, that our immortal countryman, Robbie Burns—the glory o' our age—sank, at our very door, neglected and in poverty, wi' a broken heart, into the grave. Sandy,' added I, 'never think o' being a poet. If ye attempt it, ye will embark upon an ocean where, for every one that reaches their desired haven, ninety and nine become a wreck.

On such occasions, Sandy used to listen most attentively an' crack to me very auld-farrantly. Well, sir, it was just after ye went to learn to be a doctor, that I resolved to try an' do something to push him forward mysel, as his parents were not in ability; and I had made application to a gentleman on his behalf, to use his influence to procure him a bursary in ane o' the universities, when Sandy's faither died, and, puir man, left hardly as meikle behind him as would pay the expenses o' his funeral. This was a death-blow to Sandy's prospects an' my hopes. He wasna seventeen at the time, and his widowed mother had five bairns younger. He was the only ane in the family that she could look up to as a bread-winner. It was about harvest; an', when the shearing commenced, he went out wi' ithers an' took his place on the rig. As it was his first year, an' he was but a learner, his wages were but sma'; but, sma' as they were, at the end o' the season he brought them hame, an' my puir blighted scholar laddie thought himsel a man, when he placed his earnings, to a farthing, in his mother's hand.

I was sorry for Sandy. It pained me to see one by whom I had had so much credit, and who, I was conscious, would make ane o' the brightest ornaments o' the pu'pit that ever entered it, throwing his learning and his talents awa, an' doomed to be a labouring man. I lost mony a night's sleep on his account; but I was determined to serve him if I could, and I at last succeeded in getting him appointed tutor in a gentleman's family o' the name o' Crompton, owre in Cumberland. He was to teach twa bits o' laddies English and arithmetic, Latin and Greek. He wasna out eighteen when he entered upon the duties o' his office; and great cause had I to be proud o' my scholar, an' satisfied wi' my recommendation; for, before he had been six months in his situation, I received a letter from the gentleman himself, intimating his esteem for Sandy, the great progress his sons had made under his tuition, and expressin' his gratitude to me for recommending such a tutor. He was, in consequence, kind and generous to my auld scholar, and he doubled his wages, and made him presents beside; so that Sandy was enabled to assist his mother and his brethren.

But we ne'er hae a sunny day, though it be the langest day in summer, but, sooner or later, a rainy ane follows it. Now, Mr Crompton had a daughter about a year younger than Sandy. She wasna what people would ca' a pretty girl, for I hae seen her; but she had a sonsy face and intelligent een. She also, forsooth, wrote sonnets to the moon, and hymns to the rising sun. She, of a' women, was the maist likely to bewitch puir Sandy; and she did bewitch him. A strong liking sprang up between them. They couldna conceal their partiality for ane anither. He was everything that was perfect in her een, an' she was an angel in his. Her name was Ann; and he had celebrated it in every measure, from the hop-and-step line of four syllables to that o' fourteen, which rolleth like the echoing o' a trumpet.

Now, her faither, though a ceevil an' a kind man, was also a shrewd, sharp-sighted, an' determined man; an' he saw

the flutter that had risen up in the breasts o' his daughter and the young tutor. So he sent for Sandy, and without seeming to be angry wi' him, or even hinting at the cause—

'Mr Rutherford,' said he, 'you are aware that I am highly gratified with the manner in which you have discharged the duties of tutor to my boys; but I have been thinking that it will be more to their advantage that their education, for the future, be a public one, and to-morrow I intend sending them to a boarding-school in Yorkshire.'

'To-morrow!' said Sandy, mechanically, scarce knowing what he said, or where he stood.

'To-morrow,' added Mr Crompton; 'and I have sent for you, sir, in order to settle with you respecting your salary.'

This was bringing the matter home to the business and the bosom of the scholar somewhat suddenly. Little as he was versed in the ways of the world, something like the real cause for the hasty removal of his pupils to Yorkshire began to dawn upon his mind. He was stricken with dismay and with great agony, and he longed to pour out his soul upon the gentle bosom of Ann. But she had gone on a visit, with her mother, to a friend in a different part of the country, and Mr. Crompton was to set out with his sons for Yorkshire on the following day. Then, also, would Sandy have to return to the humble roof of his mother. When he retired to pack up his books and his few things, he wrung his hands—yea there were tears upon his cheeks; and, in the bitterness of his spirit, he said—

'My own sweet Ann! and shall I never see thee again—never hear thee—never hope!' And he laid his hand upon his forehead and pressed it there, repeating as he did so—'never! oh, never!'

I was surprised beyond measure when Sandy came back to Annan and, wi' a wo-begone countenance, called upon me. I thought that Mr Crompton was not a man of the discernment and sagacity that I had given him credit to be, and I desired Sandy not to lay it so sair to heart, for that something else would cast up. But, in a day or two, I received a letter from the gentleman himself, shewing me how matters stood, and giving me to understand the *why* and the *wherefore*.

'O the gowk!' said I, 'what business had he to fa' in love, when he had the bairns an' his books to mind.'

So I determined to rally him a wee thought on the subject, in order to bring him back to his senses; for, when a hafflins laddie is labouring under the first dizziness o' a bonny lassie's influence, I dinna consider that he is capable o' either seeing, feeling, hearing, or acting wi' the common-sense discretion o' a reasonable being. It is a pleasant heating and wandering o' the brain. Therefore, the next time I saw him—

'Sandy,' says I, 'wha was't laid Troy in ashes?' He at first started and stared at me, rather vexed like, but, at last, he answered, wi' a sort o' forced laugh—

'A woman.'

'A woman, was it?' says I; 'an' wha was the cause o' Sandy Rutherford losing his situation as tutor, an' being sent back to Annan?'

'Sir!' said he, and he scowled down his eye-brows, and gied a look at me that would hae spained a ewe's lamb. I saw that he was too far gone, and that his mind was in a state that it would not be safe to trifle wi'; so I tried him no more upon the subject.

Weel, as his mother, puir woman, had enough to do, and couldna keep him in idleness, and as there was naething for him in Annan, he went to Edinburgh to see what would cast up, and what his talents and education would do for him there. He had recommendations from several gentlemen, and also from myself But month after month passed on, and he was like to hear of nothing. His mother was becoming extremely unhappy on his account, and the more so because he had given up writing, which astonished me a great deal, for I could not divine the cause of such conduct as not to write to his own mother, to say that he was well or what he was doing; and I was the more surprised at it, because of the excellent opinion I had entertained of his character and disposition. However, I think it would be about six months after he had left, I received a letter from him; and, as that letter is of importance in giving you an account of his history, I shall just step along to the school for it, where I have it carefully placed in my desk, and shall bring it and any other papers that I think may be necessary in giving you an account of your other schoolfellows."

Thus saying, Dominie Grierson, taking up his three-cornered hat and silver-mounted walking-stick, stalked out of the room. And, as people generally like to have some idea of the sort of person who is telling them a story, I shall here describe to them the appearance of Mr Grierson. He was a fine-looking old man, about five feet nine inches high—his age might be about threescore and fifteen, and he was a bachelor. His hair was as white as the driven snow, yet as fresh and as thick as though he had been but thirty. His face was pale. He could not properly be called corpulent, but his person had an inclination that way. His shoes were fastened with large silver buckles; he wore a pair of the finest black lambs'-wool stockings; breeches of the same colour, fastened at the knees by buckles, similar to those in his shoes. His coat and waistcoat were also black, and both were exceedingly capacious; for the former, with its broad skirts, which descended almost to his heels, would have made a greatcoat now-a-days; and in the kingly flaps of the latter, which defended his loins, was cloth enough and to spare to have made a modern vest. This, with the broad-brimmed round-crowned, three-cornered hat, already referred to, a pair of spectacles, and the silver mounted cane, completed the outward appearance of Dominie Grierson, with the exception of his cambric handkerchief, which was whiter than his own locks, and did credit to the cleanliness of his housekeeper, and her skill as a laundress.

In a few moments he returned, with Sandy's letter and other papers in his hand, and helping himself to another glass of wine, he rubbed the glass of his spectacles with his handkerchief, and said—

"Now, doctor, here is poor Sandy's letter; listen and ye shall hear it.

Edinburgh, June 10, 17—.

'Honoured Sir,—I fear that, on account of my not having written to you, you will, ere now, have accused me of ingratitude; and when I tell you that, until the other day, I have not for months even written to my mother, you may think me undutiful as well as ungrateful. But my own breast holds me guiltless of both. When I arrived here I met with nothing but disappointments, and those I found at every hand. For many weeks I walked the streets of this city in despair hopeless as a fallen angel. I was hungry, and no one gave me to eat; but they knew not that I was in want. Keen misery held me in its grasp—ruin caressed me, and laughed at its plaything. I will not pain you by detailing a catalogue of the privations I endured, and which none but those who have felt and fathomed the depths of misery, can imagine. Through your letter of recommendation, I was engaged to give private lessons to two pupils, but the salary was small, and that was only to be paid quarterly. While I was teaching them, I was starving, living on a penny a-day. But this was not all. I was frequently without a lodging; and being expelled from one for lack of the means of paying for it, it was many days before I could venture to inquire for another. My lodging was on a common stair, or on the bare sides of the Calton; and my clothes, from exposure to the weather, became unsightly They were no longer fitting garments for one who gave lessons in a fashionable family. For several days I observed the eyes of the lady of the house where I taught, fixed with a most supercilious and scrutinizing

expression upon my shabby and unfortunate coat. I saw and felt that she was weighing the shabbiness of my garments against my qualifications, and I trembled for the consequence. In a short time, my worst fears were realized; for, one day, calling as usual, instead of being shewn into a small parlour, where I gave my lessons, the man-servant, who opened the door, permitted me to stand in the lobby, and, in two minutes, returned with two guineas upon a small silver-plate, intimating, as he held them before me, that 'the services of Mr Rutherford were no longer required.' The sight of the two guineas took away the bitterness and mortification of the abrupt dismissal. I pocketed them, and engaged a lodging; and never, until that night, did I know or feel the exquisite luxury of a deep, dreamless sleep. It was bathing in Lethe, and rising refreshed, having no consciousness, save the grateful feeling of the cooling waters of forgetfulness around you. Having, some weeks ago, translated an old deed, which was written in Latin, for a gentleman who is what is called an in-door advocate, and who has an extensive practice, he has been pleased to take me into his office, and has fixed on me a liberal salary. He advises me to push my way to the bar, and kindly promises his assistance. I shall follow his advice, and I despair not but I may one day solicit the hand of the only woman I ever have loved, or can love, from her father, as his equal. I am, Sir, yours, indebtedly,

'ALEX. RUTHERFORD.'

Now, sir, (continued the dominie,) about three years after I had received this letter, my old scholar was called to the bar, and a brilliant first appearance he made. Bench bar, and jury, were lost in wonder at the power o' his eloquence. A Demosthenes had risen up amongst them. The half o' Edinburgh spoke o' naething but the young advocate. But it was on the very day that he made his first appearance as a pleader, that I received a letter from Mr Crompton, begging to know if I could gie him ony information respecting the old tutor o' his family, and stating, in the language of a broken-hearted man, that his only daughter was then upon her deathbed, and that before she died she begged she might be permitted to see and to speak with Alexander Rutherford. I enclosed the letter, and sent it off to the young advocate. He was sitting at a dinner party, receiving the homage of beauty, and the congratulations of learned men, when the fatal letter was put into his hands. He broke the seal—his hand shook as he read—his cheeks grew pale—and large drops of sweat burst upon his brow. He rose from the table. He scarce knew what he did. But, within half-an-hour, he was posting on his way to Cumberland. He reached the house, her parents received him with tears, and he was conducted into the room where the dying maiden lay. She knew his voice as he approached.

'He is come!—he is come!—he loves me still!' cried the poor thing, endeavouring to raise herself upon her elbow.

Sandy approached the bedside—he burst into tears—he bent down and kissed her pale and wasted cheeks, over which death seemed already to have cast its shadow.

'Ann! my beloved Ann!' said he, and he took her hand in his, and pressed it to his lips; 'do not leave me; we shall yet be happy!'

Her eyes brightened for a moment—in them joy struggled with death, and the contest was unequal. From the day that he had been sent from her father's house, she had withered away as a tender flower that is transplanted to an unkindly soil. She desired that they would lift her up, and she placed her hand upon his shoulder, and, gazing anxiously in his face, said—

'And Alexander still loves me—even in death!'

'Yes, dearest—yes!' he replied. But she had scarce heard his answer, and returned it with a smile of happiness, when her head sank upon his bosom, and a deep sigh escaped from hers. It was her last. Her soul seemed only to have lingered till her eyes might look on him. She was removed a corpse from his breast; but on that breast the weight of death was still left. He became melancholy—his ambition died—she seemed to have been the only object that stimulated him to pursue fame and to seek for fortune. In intense study he sought to forget his grief—or rather he made them companions—till his health broke under them; and, in the thirtieth year of his age, died one who possessed talents and learning that would have adorned his country, and rendered his name immortal. Such, sir, is the brief history o' yer auld class-fellow, Solitary Sandy.

In the history o'

GLAIKIT WILLIE,

(continued Mr Grierson,) the only thing remarkable is, that he has been as fortunate a man as he was a thochtless laddie. After leaving the school, he flung his Greek and Latin aside, and that was easily done, for it was but little that he ever learned, and less that he remembered, for he paid so little attention to onything he did, that what he got by heart one day he forgot the next. In spite o' the remonstrances o' his friends, naething would haud Willie but he would be a sailor. Weel, he was put on board o' an American trader, and for several years there was naething heard o' concerning him, but accidents that had happened him, and all through his glaikitness. Sometimes he was fa'ing owre a boat and was mostly drowned; and, at other times, we heard o' him fa'ing headlong into the ship's hold; ance o' his tumbling overboard in the middle o' the great Atlantic; and, at last, o' his fa'ing from the mast upon the deck, and having his legs broken. It was the luckiest thing that ever happened him. It brought him to think, and gied him leisure to do it; he was laid up for twelve weeks, and, during part o' the time, he applied himself to navigation, in the elements o' which science I had instructed him. Soon after his recovery, he got the command o' a vessel, and was very fortunate, and, for several years, he has been sole owner of a number of vessels, and is reputed to be very rich. He also married weel, as the phrase runs, for the woman had a vast o' money, only she was—a mulatto. That, sir, is a' I ken concerning William Armstrong, or, as ye ca'ed him, Glaikit Willie; for he was a callant that was so thochtless when under my care, that he never interested me a great deal. And noo, sir, I shall gie ye a' the particulars I know concerning the fate o'

VENTURESOME JAMIE.

Ye will remember him best o' ony o' them, I reckon; for even when ye were baith bits o' callants, there was a sort o' rivalship between ye for the affections o' bonny Katie Alison, the loveliest lassie that ever I had at my school. I hae frequently observed the looks o' jealousy that used to pass between ye when she seemed to shew mair kindness to ane than anither; and, when ye little thocht I saw ye, I hae noticed ane o' ye pushing oranges into her hand, and anither sweeties. When she got a bit comb, too, to fasten up her gowden hair, I weel divined whose pennies had purchased it—for they were yours, Doctor. I remember, also, hoo ye was aye a greater favourite wi' her than Jamie, and hoo he challenged ye to fecht him for her affections, and owrecam' ye in the battle, and sent ye to the school next day wi' yer face a' disfigured—and I, as in duty bound, gied each o' ye a heartier threshin' than ye had gien ane anither. Katie hung her head a' the time, and when she looked up, a tear was rowin' in her bonnie blue een. But ye left the school and the country-side, when ye was little mair than seventeen; and the next thing that we heard o' ye was that ye had gane oot to India about three years afterwards. Yer departure evidently removed a load from Jamie's breast. He followed Katie like her shadow, though with but little success, as far as I could perceive, and as it was generally given out

But, ye must remember, in his case, the name o' Venturesome Jamie was well applied. Never in my born days did I know such a callant. He would have climbed the highest trees as though he had been speelin' owre a common yett, and swung himsel by the heels frae their tapmost branches. Oh, he was a terrible laddie! When I hae seen ye a' bathing in the river, sometimes I used to tremble for him. He was a perfect amphibious animal. I have seen him dive from a height o' twenty or thirty feet, and remain under the water till I almost lost my breath wi' anxiety for his uprising; and then he would have risen at as many yards distant from the place where he had dived. I recollect o' hearing o' his permitting himsel to be suspended owre a precipice aboon a hundred feet high, wi' a rope fastened round his oxters, and three laddies like himsel hauding on by the ither end o't—and this was dune merely to harry the nest o' a water-wagtail. Had the screams o' the callants, who fund him owre heavy for them, and that they were unable to draw him up again, not brought some ploughmen to their assistance, he must have been precipitated into eternity. However, as I intended to say, it was shortly after the news arrived o' your having sailed for India, that a fire broke out in the dead o' night in a house occupied by Katie Alison's father. Never shall I forget the uproar and consternation o' that terrible night. There was not a countenance in the town but was pale wi' terror. The flames roared and raged from every window, and were visible through some parts in the roof. The great black clouds o' smoke seemed rushing from the crater of a volcano. The floors o' the second story were falling, and crashing, and crackling, and great burning sparks, some o' them as big as a man's hand, were rising in thousands and tens o' thousands from the flaming ruins, and were driven by the wind, like a shower o' fire, across the heavens. It was the most fearsome sight I had ever beheld. But this was not the worst o't; for, at a window in the third story, which was the only one in the house from which the flames were not bursting, stood bonny Katie Alison, wringing her hands and screaming for assistance, while her gowden hair fell upon her shouthers, and her cries were heard aboon the raging o' the conflagration. I heard her crying distinctly—'My father!—my father!—will nobody save my father!' for he lay ill of a fever in the room where she was, and was unconscious of his situation. But there was none to render them assistance. At times, the flames and the smoke, issuing from the windows below, concealed her from the eyes of the multitude. Several had attempted her rescue, but all of them had been forced to retreat, and some of them scorched fearfully; for in many places the stairs had given way, and the flames were bursting on every side. They were attempting to throw up a rope to her assistance—for the flames issued so fiercely from the lower windows, that, though a ladder had been raised, no man could have ascended it—when, at that moment, my old scholar, James Johnstone, (Venturesome Jamie, indeed!) arrived. He heard the cries o' Katie---he beheld her hands outstretched for help---'Let me past!---let me past!---ye cowards! ye cowards!' cried he, as he eagerly forced his way through the crowd. He rushed into the door, from which the dense smoke and the sparks were issuing as from a great furnace. There was a thrill o' horror through the crowd, for they kenned his character, and they kenned also his fondness for Katie—and no one expected to see him in life again. But, in less than ten seconds from his rushing in at the door, he was seen to spring forward to the window where Katie stood---he flung his arm round her waist, and, in an instant, both disappeared—but, within a quarter of a minute, he rushed out at the street door, through the black smoke and the thick sparks, wi' the bonny creature that he adored in his arms. O doctor, had ye heard the shout that burst frae the multitude!—there was not one amongst them at that moment that couldna have hugged Jamie to his heart. His hands were sore burned, and on several places his clothes were on fire. Katie was but little hurt; but, on finding herself on the street, she cast an anxious and despairing look towards the window from which she had been snatched, and again wringing her hands, exclaimed, in accents of bitterness that go through my heart to this day—

'My father!—oh, my father!—is there no help for him?—shall my father perish?'

'The rope!—gie me the rope!' cried Jamie. He snatched it from the hand of a bystander, and again rushed into the smoking ruins. The consternation of the crowd became greater, and their anxiety more intense than before. Full three minutes passed, and nothing was seen of him. The crowded street became as silent as death; even those who were running backward and forward carrying water, for a time stood still. The suspense was agonizing. At length he appeared at the window, with the sick man wrapt up in the bedclothes, and holding him to his side with his right arm around him. The hope and fear of the people became indescribable. Never did I witness such a scene!—never may I witness such again! Having fastened one end of the rope to the bed, he flung the other from the window to the street; and, grasping it with his left hand, he drew himself out at the window, with Katie's faither in his arm, and, crossing his feet around the rope, he slid down to the street, bearing his burden with him! Then, sir, the congratulations o' the multitude were unbounded. Every one was anxious to shake him by the hand; but, what with the burning his right hand had sustained, and the worse than burning his left hand had suffered wi' the sliding down a rope frae a third story wi' a man under his arm, I may say that my venturesome and gallant auld scholar hadna a hand to shake.

Ye canna be surprised to hear—(and, at the time o' life ye've arrived at, ye'll be no longer jealous—besides, during dinner, I think ye spoke o' having a wife and family)—I say, therefore, doctor, that ye'll neither be jealous nor surprised to hear that from that day Katie's dryness to Jamie melted down. Moreover, as ye had gane out to India, where ye would be mair likely to look after siller than think o' a wife, and as I understand ye had dropped correspondence for some length o' time, ye couldna think yoursel in ony way slighted. Now, folk say that 'nineteen *nay-says* are half a *yes*.' For my part, (and my age is approaching the heels o' the patriarchs,) I never put it in the power o' woman born to say *No* to me. But, as I have heard and believe, Katie had said *No* to Jamie before the fire, not only nineteen times, but thirty-eight times twice told, and he found seventy-six (which is about my age) nae nearer a *yea* than the first *nay*. And folk said it was a' on account o' a foolish passion for the doctor laddie that had gane abroad. But Katie was a kind, gratefu' lassie. She couldna look wi cauldness upon the man that had not only saved her life but her father's also; and I ought to have informed you, that, within two minutes from the time of her father's being snatched from the room where he lay, the floor fell in, and the flames burst from the window where Katie had been standing a few minutes before.

Her father recovered from the fever, but he died within six months after the fire, and left her a portionless orphan, or what was next door to it. Jamie urged her to make him happy, and at last she consented, and they were married. But ye remember that his parents were in affluent circumstances; they thought he had demeaned himself by his marriage, and they shut their door upon him, and disowned him a'thegither. As he was his father's heir, he was brought up to no calling or business whatsoever; and, when the auld man not only vowed to cut him off wi' a shilling, on account o' his marriage, but absolutely got his will altered accordingly, what did the silly lad do, but in desperation, list into a regiment that was gaun' abroad. The laddie has done

it in a fit o' passion, said I, 'and what will become o' poor Katie?' Weel, although it was said that the lassie never had ony particular affection for him, but just married him out o' gratitude, and although several genteel families in the neighbourhood offered her respectable and comfortable situations, (for she was universally liked,) yet the strange creature preferred to follow the hard fortunes o' Jamie, who had been disowned on her account, and she implored the officers o' the regiment to be allowed to accompany him. It is possible that they were interested with her appearance, and what they had heard of his connection, and the manner in which he had been treated, for they granted her request; and, about a month after he enlisted, the regiment marched from Carlisle, and Katie accompanied her husband. They went abroad somewhere; to the East or West Indies, I believe; but, from that day to this, I have never heard a word concerning either the one or the other, or whether they be living or not. All I know is, that the auld man died within two years after his son had become a soldier, and, keeping his resentment to his latest breath, actually left his property to a brother's son. And that, sir, is all that I know of Venturesome Jamie, and your old sweetheart, Katie."

The doctor looked thoughtful—exceedingly thoughtful; and the auld dominie, acquiring additional loquacity as he went on, poured out another glass, and added—

"But come, doctor, we will drink a bumper, 'for auld langsyne,' to the lassie wi' the gowden locks, be she dead or living."

"With my whole heart and soul," replied the doctor, impassionedly; and, pouring out a glass, he drained it to the dregs.

"The auld feeling is not quenched yet, doctor," said the venerable teacher, "and I am sorry for it; for, had I known, I would have spoken more guardedly. But I will proceed to gie ye an account o' the rest o' your class-fellows, and I will do it briefly. There was Walter Fairbairn, who went amongst ye by the name o'

CAUTIOUS WATTY.

He was the queerest laddie that ever I had at my school. He had neither talent nor cleverness; but he made up for both, and I may say more than made up for both, by method and application. Ye would have said that nature had been in a miserly humour when it made his brains; but, if it had been niggardly in the quantity, it certainly had spared no pains in placing them properly. He was the very reverse o' Solitary Sandy. I never could get Watty to scan a line or construe a sentence right in my days. He did not seem to understand the nature o' words—or, at least, in so far as applied to sentiment, idea, or fine writing. Figures were Watty's alphabet; and, from his earliest years, pounds, shillings, and pence, were the syllables by which he joined them together. The abstruser points of mathematics were beyond his intellect; but he seemed to have a liking for the *certainty* of the science, and he manifested a wish to master it. My housekeeper that then was, has informed me, that, when a' the rest o' ye wad hae been selling your copies as waste paper, for *taffy*, or what some ca' *treacle-candy*, Watty would only part wi' his to the paper purchaser for money down; and when ony o' ye took a greenin' for the sweet things o' the shopkeeper, without a halfpenny to purchase one, Watty would volunteer to lend ye the money until a certain day, upon condition that ye would then pay him a penny for the loan o' his halfpenny. But he exhibited a grand trait o' this disposition when he cam' to learn the rule o' *Compound Interest* Indeed, I need not say he *learned* it, for he literally *devoured* it. He wrought every question in Dilworth's Rule within two days; and, when he had finished it, (for he seldom had his slate away from my face and I was half tired wi' saying to him, 'That will do sir,') he came up to my desk, and says he, wi' a face as earnest as a judge—

'May I go through this rule again, sir?'

'I think ve understand it, Watty,' said I, rather significantly.

'But I would like to be perfect in it, sir,' answered he.

'Then, go through it again, Watty,' said I, 'and I have nae doubt but ye will be *perfect* in it very quickly.'

I said this wi' a degree o' irony which I was not then, and which I am not now, in the habit of exhibiting before my scholars; but, from what I had observed and heard o' him it betrayed to me a trait in human nature that literally disgusted me. But I have no pleasure in dwelling upon his history. Shortly after leaving the school, he was sent up to London to an uncle; and, as his parents had the means o' setting him up in the world, he was there to make choice o' a profession. After looking about the great city for a time, it was the choice and pleasure o' Cautious Watty to be bound as an apprentice to a pawnbroker. He afterwards commenced business for himself, and every day in his life indulging in his favourite study, Compound Interest, and, as far as he durst, putting it in practice, he, in a short time, became rich. But, as his substance increased, he did not confine himself to portable articles, or such things as are usually taken in pledge by the members of his profession; but he took estates in pledge, receiving the title-deeds as his security, and in such cases he did exact his Compound Interest to the last farthing to which he could stretch it. He neither knew the meaning of generosity nor mercy. Shakspeare's beautiful apostrophe to the latter god-like attribute in the *Merchant of Venice*, would have been flat nonsense in the estimation of Watty. He had but one answer to every argument and to every case, and which he laid to his conscience in all his transactions, (if he had a conscience,) and that was—'A bargain's a bargain!' This was his ten times repeated phrase every day. It was the doctrine by which he swore; and Shylock would have died wi' envy to have seen Watty exacting his '*pound o' flesh.*' I have only to tell ye that he has been twice married. The first time was to a widow four years older than his mother, wi' whom he got ten thousand. The second time was to a maiden lady who had been a coquette and a flirt in her day, but who, when the deep crow-feet upon her brow began to reflect sermons from her looking-glass, became a patroniser of piety and religious institutions. Watty heard o' her fortune, and o' her disposition and habits. He turned an Episcopalian because she was one. He became a sitter and a regular attender in the same pew in the church. He began his courtship by opening the pew door to her when he saw her coming, before the sexton reached it. He next sought her out the services for the day in the prayer-book—he had it always open, and ready to put in her hand. He dusted the cushion on which she was to sit, with his handkerchief, as she entered the pew. He, in short, shewed her a hundred little pious attentions. The sensibility of the converted flirt was affected by them. At length he offered her his arm from the pew to the hackney coach or sedan-chair which waited for her at the church door; and, eventually, he led her to the altar in the seventy-third year of her age; when, to use his own words, he married her thirty thousand pounds, and took the old woman before the minister as a witness. Such, sir, is all I know concerning Cautious Watty

"The next o' your auld class-mates that I have to notice, (continued Mr Grierson,) is

LEEIN' PETER.

Peter Murray was the cause o' mair grief to me than ony scholar that ever was at my school. He could not tell a story the same way in which he heard it, or give ye a direct answer to a positive question, had it been to save his life. I sometimes was at a loss whether to attribute his grievious pro-

pensity to a defect o' memory, a preponderance o' imagination over baith memory and judgment, or to the natural depravity o' his heart, and the force o' abominable habits early acquired. Certain it is, that all the thrashing that I could thrash, I couldna get the laddie to speak the truth. His parents were perpetually coming to me to lick him soundly for this lie and the other lie; and I did lick him, until I saw that bodily punishment was of no effect. Moral means were to be tried, and I did try them. I tried to shame him out o' it. I reasoned wi' him. I shewed him the folly and the enormity o' his offence, and also pointed out its consequences—but I might as weel hae spoken to the stane in the wa'. He was Leein' Peter still. After he left me, he was a while wi' a grocer, and a while wi' a haberdasher, and then he went to a painter, and after that he was admitted into a writer's office; but, one after another, they had to turn him away, and a' on account o' his unconquerable habit o' uttering falsehoods. His character became so well known, that nobody about the place would take him to be anything. He was a sad heart-break to his parents, and they were as decent people as ye could meet wi'. But, as they had respectable connections, they got him into some situation about Edinburgh, where his character and his failings were unknown. But it was altogether useless. He was turned out of one situation after another, and a' on account of his incurable and dangerous habit, until his friends could do no more for him. Noo, doctor, I daresay ye may have observed, that a confirmed drunkard, rather than want drink, will steal to procure it—and, as sure as that is the case, tak my word for it, that, in nine cases out of ten, he who begins by being a habitual liar, will end in being a thief. Such was the case wi' Leein' Peter. After being disgraced and turned from one situation after anither, he at last was caught in the act o' purloining his master's property and cast into prison. He broke his mother's heart, and covered his father's grey hairs wi' shame; and he sank from one state o' degradation to another, till now, I believe, he is ane o' those prowlers and pests o' society, who are to be found in every large town, and who live naebody can tell how, but every one can tell that it cannot be honestly. Such. sir, has been the fate o' Leein' Peter.

There is only another o' your book-mates that I have to make mention o', and that is John Mathewson, or

JOCK THE DUNCE.

Many a score o' times hae I said that Jock's head was as impervious to learnin' as a nether mill-stane. It would hae been as easy to hae driven Mensuration into the head o' an ox, as instruction into the brain o' Jock Mathewson. He was a born dunce. I fleeched him, and I coaxed him, and I endeavoured to divert him to get him to learn, and I kicked him, and I cuffed him; but I might as weel hae kicked my heel upon the floor, or fleeched the fireplace. Jock was knowledge-proof. All my efforts were o' no avail. I could get him to learn nothing, and to comprehend nothing. Often I had half made up my mind to turn him away from the school, for I saw that I never would have any credit by the blockhead. But what was most annoying was, that here was his mother at me, every hand-awhile, saying---

'Mr Grierson, I'm really surprised at ye. My son, John, is not comin on ava. I really wush ye wad tak mair pains wi' him. It is an unco thing to be payin' you guid money, and the laddie to be getting nae guid for it. I wad hae ye to understand, that his faither doesna make his money sae easily—no by sitting on a seat, or walking up and down a room, as ye do. There's such a ane's son awa into the Latin, nae less, I understand, and my John no out o' the Testament. But, depend upon it, Mr Grierson, if ye dinna try to do something wi' him, I maun tak him awa from your school, and that is the short and the lang o't.'

'Do sae, ma'am, said I, and I'll thank ye. Mercy me! it's a bonny thing, indeed ....do ye suppose that I had the makin o' your son? If Nature has formed his head out o' a whin-stane, can I transform it into marble? Your son would try the patience o' Job-- his head is thicker than a door-post. I can mak naething o' him. I would sooner teach a hundred than be troubled wi' him.'

'Hundred here, hundred there!' said she, in a tift; 'but it's a hard matter, Mr Grierson, for his faither and me to be payin' ye money for naething; an' if ye dinna try to mak something o' him, I'll tak him frae your school, an' that will be baith seen an' heard tell o'!'

So saying, away she would drive, tossing her head wi' the airs o' my lady. Ye canna conceive, sir, what a teacher has to put up wi'. Thomson says---

'Delightful task
To teach the young idea how to shoot!'

I wish to goodness he had tried it, and a month's specimen o' its *delights* would have surfeited him, and instead o' what he has written, he would have said---

Degrading thought
To be each snivelling blockhead's parent's slave!

Now, ye'll remember that Jock was perpetually sniftering and gaping wi' his mouth, or even sucking his thumb like an idiot. There was nae keeping the animal cleanly, much less instructing him; and then, if he had the book in his hand, there he sat staring owre it, wi' a look as vacant and stupid as a tortoise. Or, if he had the slate before him, there was he drawing scores on't, or amusing himsel wi' twirling and twisting the pencil in the string through the frame. Never had I such a lump o' stupidity within the walls o' my school.

After his leaving me, he was put as an apprentice to a bookseller. I thought, of all the callings under the sun, that which had been chosen for him was the least suited to a person o' his capacity. But—would ye believe it, sir?—Jock surprised us a'. He fairly turned the corner on a' my calculations. When he began to look after the lassies, he also began to "smart up." He came to my night-school, when he would be about eighteen, and I was perfectly astonished at the change that had taken place, even in the appearance o' the callant. His very nose, which had always been so stuffed and thick-like, was now an ornament to his face. He had become altogether a lively, fine-looking lad; and, more marvellous still, his whole heart's desire seemed to be to learn; and he did learn with a rapidity that both astonished and delighted me. I actually thought the instructions which I had endeavoured to instil into him for years, and apparently without effect, had been lying dormant, as it were, in the chambers o' his brain, like a cuckoo in winter—that they had been sealed up as fast as I imparted them, by some cause that I did not comprehend, and that now they had got vent, and were issuing out in rapid and vigorous strength, like a person refreshed after a sleep.

After he had been two years at the night school, so far from considering him a dunce, I regarded him as an amazing clever lad. From the instance I had had in him, I began to perceive that precocity o' intellect was nae proof o' its power. Well, shortly after the time I am speaking o', he left Annan for Glasgow, and, after being a year or twa there, he commenced business upon his own account. I may safely say, that never man was more fortunate. But, as his means increased, he did not confine himself to the business in which he had been brought up, but he became an extensive shipowner; he also became a partner in a cotton-mill concern. He was elected a member of the town council, and was distinguished as a leading member and orator of the guild. Eventually, he rose to be one of the city magistrates. He is now also an extensive landed proprietor; and I even hear it affirmed, that it is in contemplation to put him in nomination

for some place or another at the next election. Such things happen, doctor—and wha would hae thocht it o' Jock the Dunce?

Now, sir, (added the dominie,) so far as I have been able, I have given you the history o' your class-fellows. Concerning you, doctor, I have known less and heard less than o' ony o' them. You being so far away, and so long away, and your immediate relations about here being dead, so that ye have dropped correspondence, I have heard nothing concerning ye; and I have often been sorry on that account; for, believe me, doctor—(here the doctor pushed the bottle to him, and the old man, helping himself to another glass and drinking it, again continued)—I say, believe me, doctor, that I never had two scholars under my care o' whose talents I had greater opinion than o' Solitary Sandy and yoursel; and it has often vexed me that I could hear naething concerning ye, or whether you were dead or living. Now, sir, if ye'll favour me wi' an account o' your history, from the time o' your going out to India, your auld dominie will be obliged to ye; for I like to hear concerning ye all, as though ye had been my ain bairns."

"There is little of interest in my history, sir," said the doctor; "but, so far as there is any, your wish shall be gratified." And he proceeded as is hereafter written.

THE DOCTOR'S STORY.

"In your history, sir, of Venturesome Jamie, which you are unable to finish, you mentioned the rivalry that existed between him and me, for the affections o' bonny Kattie Alison. James was a noble fellow. I am not ashamed that I had such a rival. In our youth I esteemed him while I hated him. But, sir, I do not remember the time when Katie Alison was not as a dream in my heart—when I did not tremble at her touch. Even when we pulled the gowans and the cowslips together, though there had been twenty present, it was for Katie that I pulled mine. When we plaited the rushes, I did it for her. She preferred me to Jamie, and I knew it. When I left your school, and when I proceeded to India, I did not forget her. But, as you said, men go there to make money—so did I. My friends laughed at my boyish fancy—they endeavoured to make me ashamed of it. I became smitten with the eastern disease of fortune-making, and, though I did not forget her, I neglected her.

But, sir, to drop this: I was not twenty-one when I arrived in Bombay; nor had I been long there till I was appointed physician to several Persee families of great wealth. With but little effort, fortune opened before me. I performed a few surgical operations of considerable difficulty, with success. In several desperate cases I effected cures, and my name was spread not only through the city, but throughout the island. The riches I went to seek I found. But even then, sir, my heart would turn to your school, and to the happy hours I had spent by the side of bonny Katie Alison.

However, it would be of no interest to enter into the details of my monotonous life. I shall dwell only upon one incident, which is, of all others, the most remarkable that ever occurred to me, and which took place about six years after my arrival in India. I was in my carriage, and accompanying the remains of a patient to the burial ground—for you know that doctors cannot cure, when Death is determined to have its way. The burial ground lies about three miles from Bombay, across an extensive and beautiful plain, and the road to it is by a sort of an avenue, lined and shaded on each side by cocoa-nut trees, which spread their branches over the path, and distil their cooling juice into the cups which the Hindoos have placed around them to receive it. You can form but a faint conception of the clear azure of an Indian sky, and never had I seen it more beautiful than on the day to which I refer, though some of the weather-prophets about Bombay were predicting a storm.

We were about the middle of the avenue I have described, when we overtook the funeral of an officer who had held a commission in a corps of Sepoys. The coffin was carried upon the shoulders of four soldiers; before it marched the Sepoys, and behind it, seated in a palanquin borne by four Hindoos, came the widow of the deceased. A large black veil thrown over her head, almost enveloped her person. Her head was bent upon her bosom, and she seemed to weep bitterly. We followed behind them to the burial-place; but, before the service was half concluded, the heavens overcast, and a storm, such as I had never witnessed, burst over our heads, and hurled its fury upon the graves. The rain poured down in a fierce and impetuous torrent—but you know not, in this country, what a torrent of rain is. The thunder seemed tearing heaven in twain. It rolled, reverbed, and pealed, and rattled with its tremendous voice over the graves of the dead, as though it were the outbursting of eternity—the first blast of the archangel's trumpet—announcing the coming judgment! The incessant lightnings flashed through the air, like spirits winged with flame, and awakening the dead.

The Sepoys fled in terror, and hastened to the city, to escape the terrible fury of the storm. Even those who had accompanied my friend's body fled with them, before the earth was covered over the dead that they had followed to the grave. But still, by the side of the officer's grave, and unmindful of the storm, stood his poor widow. She refused to leave the spot till the last sod was placed upon her husband's bosom. My heart bled for her. Within three yards from her, stood a veteran English sergeant, who, with the Hindoos, that bore her palanquin, were all that remained in the burial-place.

Common humanity prompted me to offer her a place in my carriage back to the city. I inquired of the sergeant who the deceased was. He informed me that he was a young Scotch officer—that his marriage had offended his friends—that they had denounced him in consequence—that he had enlisted—and that the officers of the regiment which he had first joined, had procured him an ensigncy in a corps of Sepoys, but that he had died, leaving the young widow who wept over his grave, a stranger in a strange land. And," added the sergeant, "a braver fellow never set foot upon the ground."

When the last sod had been placed upon the grave, I approached the young widow. I respectfully offered to convey her and the sergeant to the city in my carriage, as the violence of the storm increased.

At my voice, she started—she uttered a suppressed scream—she raised her head—she withdrew her handkerchief from her eyes!—I beheld her features!—and, gracious Heaven!—whom, sir!—whom—whom did I see, but my own Katie Alison!"

"Doctor!—Doctor!" exclaimed the old dominie, starting from his seat, "what do I hear?"

"I cannot describe to you," continued the other, "the tumultuous joy, combined with agony, the indescribable feelings of that moment. We stood—we gasped—we gazed upon each other; neither of us spoke. I took her hand—I led her to the carriage—I conveyed her to the city."

"And, O doctor, what then?" inquired the dominie.

"Why, sir," said the doctor, "many days passed—many words were spoken—mutual tears were shed for Jamie Johnstone—and bonny Katie Alison, the lassie of my first love, became my wife, and is the mother of my children. She will be here in a few days, and will see her old dominie.



WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE DOOM OF SOULIS.

"They rolled him up in a sheet of lead,
A sheet of lead for a funeral pall;
They plunged him in the caldron red,
And melted him—lead, and bones, and all."—*Leyden.*

A GAZETTEER would inform you that Denholm is a village beautifully situated near the banks of the Teviot, about midway between Jedburgh and Hawick, and in the parish of Cavers; and, perhaps, if of modern date, it would add, it has the honour of being the birth-place of Dr Leyden. However, it was somewhat early on a summer morning, a few years ago, that a young man, a stranger, with a fishing-rod in his hand, and a creel fastened to his shoulders, entered the village. He stood in the midst of it, and, turning round—"This, then," said he, "is the birth-place of Leyden—the son of genius—the martyr of study—the friend of Scott!"

Few of the villagers were astir; and at the first he met—who carried a spade over his shoulder, and appeared to be a ditcher—he inquired if he could shew him the house in which the bard and scholar was born.

"Ou, ay, sir," said the man, "I wat can I—I'll shew ye that instantly, and proud to shew you it too."

"That is good," thought the stranger; "the prophet is dead, but he yet speaketh—he hath honour in his own country."

The ditcher conducted him across the green, and past the end of a house, which was described as being the school-house, and was newly built, and led him towards an humble building, the height of which was but a single story, and which was found occupied by a millwright as a workshop. Yet, again, the stranger rejoiced to find that the occupier venerated his premises for the poet's sake, and that he honoured the genius of him who was born in their precincts.

"Dash it!"* said the stranger, quoting the habitual phrase of poor Leyden, "I shall fish none to-day." And I wonder not at his having so said; for it is not every day that we can stand beneath the thatch-clad roof—or any other roof—where was born one whose name time will bear written in undying characters on its wings, until those wings droop in the darkness of eternity.

The stranger proceeded up the Teviot, oftentimes thinking of Leyden, of all that he had written, and occasionally repeating passages aloud. He almost forgot that he had a rod in his hand—his eyes did anything but follow the fly, and, I need hardly say, his success was not great.

About mid-day, he sat down on the green bank in solitariness, to enjoy a sandwich, and he also placed by his side a small flask containing spirits, which almost every angler, who can afford it, carries with him. But he had not sat long, when a venerable-looking old man saluted him with—

"Here's a bonny day, sir." The old man stood as he spoke. There was something prepossessing in his appearance, He had a weather-beaten face, with thin white hair; blue eyes that had lost somewhat of their former lustre; his shoulders were rather bent; and he seemed a man who was certainly neither rich nor affluent, but who was at ease with the world, and the world was at ease with him.

They entered into conversation, and they sat down together. The old man appeared exactly one of those characters whom you will occasionally find fraught with the traditions of the Borders, and still tainted with, and half believing in, their ancient superstitions. I wish not to infer that superstition was carried to a greater height of absurdity on the Borders than in other parts of England and Scotland, nor even that the inhabitants of the north were as remarkable in early days for their superstitions, as they now are for their intelligence; for every nation had its superstitions, and I am persuaded that most of them might be traced to a common origin. Yet, though the same in origin, they change their likeness with the character of a nation or district. People unconsciously made their superstitions to suit themselves, though their imaginary effects still terrified them. There was, therefore, a something characteristic in the fables of our forefathers, which fables they believed as facts. The cunning deceived the ignorant—the ignorant were willing to deceive themselves; and what we now laugh at as the clever trick of a *hocus-pocus* man, was, scarce more than a century ago, received as a miracle—as a thing performed by the hand of the "prince of the powers of the air." Religion without knowledge, and still swaddled in darkness, fostered the idle fear: yea, there are few superstitions, though prostituted by wickedness, that did not owe their existence to some glimmering idea of religion. They had not seen the lamp which lightens the soul, and leadeth it to knowledge; but, having perceived its far-off reflection, plunged into the quagmire of error—and hence proceeded superstition. But I digress into a descant on the superstitions of our fathers, nor should I have done so, but that it is impossible to write a Border Tale of the olden time without bringing them forward; and, when I do so, it is not with the intention of instilling into the minds of my readers the old idea of sorcery, witchcraft, and visible spirits, but of shewing what was the belief and conduct of our forefathers. Therefore, without further comment, I shall cut short these remarks, and simply observe, that the thoughts of the young stranger still running upon Leyden, he turned to the elder, after they had sat together for some time, and said—"Did you know Dr Leyden, sir?"

"Ken him!" said the old man; "fifty years ago, I've wrought day's-work beside his father for months together!"

They continued their conversation for some time, and the younger inquired of the elder, if he were acquainted with Leyden's ballad of "Lord Soulis?"

"Why, I hae heard a verse or twa o' the ballant, sir," said the old man, "but I'm sure everybody kens the story. However, if ye're no perfectly acquaint wi' it, I'm sure I'm willing to let ye hear it wi' great pleasure; and a remarkable story it is—and just as true, sir, ye may tak my word on't, as that I'm raising this bottle to my lips."

So saying, the old man raised the flask to his mouth, and, after a regular fisher's draught, added—

"Weel, sir, I'll let ye hear the story about Lord Soulis;—You have, no doubt, heard of Hermitage Castle, which stands upon the river of that name, at no great distance from Hawick. In the days of the great and good King Robert

* This was a common expression of Leyden's, and, perhaps, was in some degree expressive of his headlong and determined character.

the Bruce, that castle was inhabited by Lord Soulis.* He was a man whose very name spread terror far and wide; for he was a tyrant and a sorcerer. He had a giant's strength, an evil eye† and a demon's heart; and he kept his *familiar*‡ locked in a chest. Peer and peasant became pale at the name of Lord Soulis. His hand smote down the strong, his eye blasted the healthy. He oppressed the poor, and he robbed the rich. He ruled over his vassals with a rod of iron. From the banks of the Tweed, the Teviot, and the Jed, with their tributaries, to beyond the Lothians, an incessant cry was raised against him to Heaven and to the king. But his life was protected by a charm, and mortal weapons could not prevail against him. (The seriousness with which the narrator said this, shewed that he gave full credit to the tradition, and believed in Lord Soulis as a sorcerer.)

He was a man of great stature, and his person was exceeding powerful. He had also royal blood in his veins, and laid claim to the crown of Scotland in opposition to the Bruce. But two things troubled him; and the one was, to place the crown of Scotland on his head—the other, to possess the hand of a fair and rich maiden, named Marion, who was about to wed with Walter, the young heir of Branxholm, the stoutest and the boldest youth on all the wide Borders. Soulis was a man who was not only of a cruel heart, but it was filled with forbidden thoughts; and, to accomplish his purposes, he went down into the dungeon of his castle, in the dead of night, that no man might see him perform the 'deed without a name.' He carried a small lamp in his hand, which threw around a lurid light, like a glow-worm in a sepulchre; and, as he went, he locked the doors behind him. He carried a cat in his arms. Behind him, a dog followed timidly, and before him into the dungeon he drove a young bull that had 'never nipped the grass.' He entered the deep and the gloomy vault, and, with a loud voice, he exclaimed—

'Spirit of darkness!—I come!'

He placed the feeble lamp upon the ground in the middle of the vault; and, with a pick-axe, which he had previously prepared, he dug a pit and buried the cat alive; and, as the poor, suffocating creature mewed, he exclaimed the louder—

'Spirit of darkness, come!'

He then leaped upon the grave of the living animal, and seizing the dog by the neck, he dashed it violently against the wall, towards the left corner where he stood, and, unable to rise, it lay howling long and piteously on the floor. Then did he plunge his knife into the throat of the young bull, and, while its bleatings mingled with the howling of the dying dog, amidst what might be called the blue darkness of the vault, he received the blood in the palms of his hands, and he stalked around the dungeon, sprinkling it in circles, and crying with a loud voice—

'Spirit of darkness, hear me!'

Again he digged a pit, and seizing the dying animal, he hurled it into the grave, feet upwards;§ and again he groaned, while the sweat stood on his brow—'Come, spirit!—come!'

He took a horse-shoe, which had lain in the vault for years, and which was called, in the family, the *spirit's shoe*, and he nailed it against the door, so that it hung obliquely;‖ and, as he gave the last blow to the nail, again he cried—

'Spirit, I obey thee!—come!'

Afterwards, he took his place in the middle of the floor, and nine times he scattered around him a handful of salt, at each time exclaiming—

'Spirit, arise!'

Then did he strike thrice nine times with his hand upon a chest which stood in the middle of the floor, and by its foot was the pale lamp, and at each blow he cried—

'Arise, spirit! arise!'

Therefore, when he had done these things, and cried twenty and seven times, the lid of the chest began to move, and a fearful figure, with a red cap* upon its head, and which resembled nothing in heaven above, or on earth below, rose, and, with a hollow voice,† inquired—

'What want ye, Soulis?'

'Power, spirit!—power!' he cried, 'that mine eyes may have their desire, and that every weapon formed by man may fall skaithless on my body, as the spent light of a waning moon!'

'Thy wish is granted, mortal!' groaned the fiend. 'To-morrow eve, young Branxholm's bride shall sit within thy bower, and his sword return bent from thy bosom, as though he had dashed it against a rock. Farewell! invoke me not again for seven years, nor open the door of the vault, but then knock thrice upon the chest and I will answer thee. Away! follow thy course of sin and prosper—*but beware of a coming wood.*'

With a loud and sudden noise, the lid of the massy chest fell, and the spirit disappeared, and from the floor of the vault issued a deep sound, like the reverbing of thunder. Soulis took up the flickering lamp, and leaving the dying dog still howling in the corner whence he had driven it, he locked the iron door, and placed the huge key in his bosom.

In the morning, his vassals came to him, and they prayed him on their bended knees, that he would lessen the weight of their hard bondage; but he laughed at their prayers, and answered them with stripes. He oppressed the widow, and persecuted the fatherless; he defied the powerful, and trampled on the weak. His name spread terror wheresoever it was breathed, and there was not in all Scotland a man more feared than the wizard Soulis, the Lord of Hermitage.

He rode forth in the morning with twenty of his chosen men behind him, and wheresoever they passed the castle or the cottage where the occupier was the enemy of Soulis or denied his right to the crown,‡ they fired the latter, destroyed the cattle around the former, or he sprinkled upon them the dust of a dead man's hand, that a murrain might come amongst them.

But, as they rode by the side of the Teviot, he beheld fair Marion, the betrothed bride of young Walter, the heir of Branxholm, riding forth with her maidens, and pursuing the red deer. 'By this token, spirit,' muttered Soulis, joyously, 'thou hast not lied—to-night young Branxholm's bride shall sit within my bower.'

He dashed the spur into the side of his fleet steed, and, although Marion and her attendants forsook the chase and fled, as they perceived him, yet, as though his *familiar* gave speed to his horse's feet, in a few seconds he rode by the side of Marion, and, throwing out his arm, he lifted her from the

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* He was also proprietor of Eccles in Berwickshire, and, according to history, was seized in the town of Berwick—but tradition sayeth otherwise.

† There is, perhaps, no superstition more widely diffused than the belief in the fascination of an evil eye or a malignant glance; and, I am sorry to say, the absurdity has still its believers.

‡ Each sorcerer was supposed to have his familiar spirit, that accompanied him; but Soulis was said to keep his locked in a chest.

§ These are the recorded practices which sorcerers resorted to, when they wished to have a *glimpse* of *invisible* spirits.

‖ In the account of the trial of Elizabeth Bathgate, wife of Alexander Pae, maltman in Eyemouth, one of the accusations in the indictment against her was, that she had "ane horse-schoe in ane darnet and secriet pairt of your dur, keepit by you thairopoun, as ane devilish meanis and instructions from the devill." But the superstitions of the Borders, which it is necessary to illustrate in these Tales, as exemplifying the character of our forefathers, will be more particularly dwelt upon, and their absurdity unmasked, in Tales which will shortly appear, entitled—"Betty Bathgate, the Witch of Eyemouth;" "Peggy Stoddart, the Witch of Edlingham;" and "The Laidley Worm of Spindlestone Heugh."

* Red-cap is a name given to spirits supposed to haunt castles.

† In the proceedings regarding Sir George Maxwell, it is gravely set forth, that the voice of evil spirits is "rough and goustie;" and, to crown all, Lilly, in his "Life and Times," informs us, that they speak Erse—and, adds he, "when they do so, it's like Irishmen, much in the throat!"

‡ If legitimacy could have been proved on the part of the grandmother of Lord Soulis, he certainly was a nearer heir to the crown than either Bruce or Baliol.

saddle, while her horse yet flew at its fastest speed, and continued its course without its fair rider.

She screamed aloud, she struggled wildly, but her attendants had fled afar off, and her strength was feeble as an insect's web in his terrible embrace. He held her upon the saddle before him—

'Marion!—fair Marion!' said the wizard and ruffian lover, 'scream not—struggle not—be calm, and hear me. I love thee, pretty one!—I love thee!' and he rudely raised her lips to his. 'Fate hath decreed thou shalt be mine, Marion—and no human power shall take thee from me. Weep not—strive not. Hear ye not, I love thee—love thee fiercely, madly, maiden, as a she-wolf doth its cubs. As a river seeketh the sea, so have I sought thee, Marion: and now, thou art mine—fate hath given thee unto me, and thy fair cheek shall rest upon a manlier bosom than that of Branxholm's beardless heir.' Thus saying, and still grasping her before him, he again plunged his spurs into his horse's sides, and he and his followers rode furiously towards Hermitage Castle.

He locked the gentle Marion within a strong chamber—he

'Wooed her as the lion wooes his bride.

And now she wept, she wrung her hands, she tore her raven hair before him, and it hung dishevelled over her face and upon her shoulders. She implored him to save her, to restore her to liberty; and again finding her tears wasted and her prayers in vain, she defied him, she invoked the vengeance of Heaven upon his head; and, at such moments, the tyrant and the reputed sorcerer stood awed and stricken in her presence. For there is something in the majesty of virtue, and the holiness of innocence, as they flash from the eyes of an injured woman, which deprives guilt of its strength, and defeats its purpose, as though Heaven lent its electricity to defend the weak.

But, wearied with importunity, and finding his threats of no effect, on the third night that she had been within his castle, he clutched her in his arms, and, while his vassals slept, he bore her to the haunted dungeon, that the spirit might throw its spell over her and compel her to love him. He unlocked the massy door. The faint howls of the dog were still heard from a corner of the vault. He placed the lamp upon the ground. He still held the gentle Marion to his side, and her terror had almost mastered her struggles. He struck his clenched hand upon the huge chest—he cried aloud—'Spirit! come forth!'

Thrice he repeated the blow—thrice he uttered aloud his invocation. But the spirit arose not at his summons. Marion knew the tale of his sorcery—she knew and believed it—and terror deprived her of consciousness. On recovering, she found herself again in the strong chamber where she had been confined, but Soulis was not with her. She strove to calm her fears, she knelt down and told her beads, and she begged that her Walter might be sent to her deliverance.

It was scarce daybreak when the young heir of Branxholm, whose bow no man could bend, and whose sword was terrible in battle, with twice ten armed men, arrived before Hermitage Castle, and demanded to speak with Lord Soulis. The warder blew his horn, and Soulis and his attendants came forth and looked over the battlement.

'What want ye, boy,' inquired the wizard chief, 'that, ere the sun be risen, ye come to seek the lion in his den?'

'I come,' replied young Walter, boldly, 'in the name of our good king, and by his authority, to demand that ye give into my hands, safe and sound, my betrothed bride, lest vengeance come upon thee.'

'Vengeance! beardling!' rejoined the sorcerer; 'who dares speak of vengeance on the house of Soulis?—or whom call ye king? The crown is mine—thy bride is mine, and thou also shalt be mine; and a dog's death shalt thou die for thy morning's boasting.'

'To arms!' he exclaimed, as he disappeared from the battlement, and within a few minutes a hundred men rushed from the gate.

Sir Walter's little band quailed as they beheld the superior force of their enemies, and they were in dread also of the sorcery of Soulis. But hope revived within them when they beheld the look of confidence on the countenance of their young leader, and thought of the strength of his arm, and the terror which his sword spread.

As hungry tigers spring upon their prey, so rushed Soulis and his vassals upon Sir Walter and his followers. No man could stand before the sword of the sorcerer. Antagonists fell as impotent things before his giant strength. Even Walter marvelled at the havoc he made, and he pressed forward to measure swords with him. But, ere he could reach him, his few followers who had escaped the hand of Soulis and his host, fled and left him to maintain the battle single-handed. Every vassal of the sorcerer, save three, pursued them; and against these three, and their charmed lord, young Walter was left to maintain the unequal strife. But, as they pressed around him, 'Back!' cried Soulis, trusting to his strength and to his charm; 'from my hand alone must Branxholm's young boaster meet his doom. It is meet that I should give his head as a toy to my bride, fair Marion.'

'Thy bride, fiend!' exclaimed Sir Walter; 'thine!—now perish!' and he attacked him furiously.

'Ha! ha!' cried Soulis, and laughed at the impetuosity of his antagonist, while he parried his thrusts; 'take rushes for thy weapon, boy; steel falls feckless upon me.'

'Vile sorcerer!' continued Walter, pressing upon him more fiercely; 'this sword shall sever thy enchantment.'

Again Soulis laughed, but he found that his contempt availed him not, for the strength of his enemy was equal to his own, and, in repelling his fierce assaults, he almost forgot the charm which rendered his body invulnerable. They fought long and desperately, when one of the followers of Soulis, suddenly and unobserved, thrusting his spear into the side of Sir Walter's horse, it reared, stumbled, and fell, and brought him to the ground.

'An arrow-schot!'* exclaimed Soulis; 'wherefore, boy didst thou presume to contend with me?' And suddenly springing from his horse, he pressed his iron heel upon the breast of his foe, and turning also the point of his sword towards his throat—

'Thou shalt not die yet,' said he; and turning to the three attendants who had not followed in the pursuit, he added—'Hither—bind him fast and sure.' Then did the three hold him on the ground, and bind his hands and his feet, while Soulis held his naked sword over him.

'Coward and wizard!' exclaimed Walter, as they dragged him within the gate, 'ye shall rue this foul treachery.'

'Ha! ha! vain, boasting boy!' returned Soulis, 'thou indeed shalt rue thy recklessness.'

He caused his vassals to bear Walter into the strong chamber where fair Marion was confined, and, grasping him by the neck, while he held his sword to his breast, he dragged him towards her, and said, sternly—'Consent thee, now, maiden, to be mine, and this boy shall live—refuse, and his head shall roll before thee on the floor as a plaything.'

'Monster!' she exclaimed, and screamed aloud; 'would ye harm my Walter?'

'Ha! my Marion!—Marion!' cried Walter, struggling to be free. And, turning his eyes fiercely upon Soulis, 'Destroy me, fiend,' he added, 'but harm not her.'

'Think on it, maiden,' cried the sorcerer, raising his sword; 'the life of thy bonny bridegroom hangs upon thy word. But ye shall have until midnight to reflect on it. Be mine, then, and harm shall not come upon him or thee; but a man shall be thy husband, and not the boy whom he hath brought to thee in bonds.'

* When cattle died suddenly, it was believed to be by an arrow-schot—that is, shot or struck down by the invisible dart of a sorcerer.

'Beshrew thee, vile sorcerer!' rejoined Walter, 'were my hands unbound, and unarmed as I am, I would force my way from thy prison, in spite of thee and thine!'

Soulis laughed scornfully, and again added—'Think on it, fair Marion.'

Then did he drag her betrothed bridegroom to a corner of the chamber, and ordering a strong chain to be brought, he fettered him against the wall; in the same manner, he fastened her to the opposite side of the apartment; but the chains with which he bound her were made of silver.

When they were left alone, 'Mourn not, sweet Marion,' said Walter, 'and think not of saving me—before to-morrow our friends will be here to thy rescue; and, though I fall a victim to the vengeance of the sorcerer, still let me be the bridegroom of thy memory.' Marion wept bitterly, and said that she would die with him.

Throughout the day, the spirit of Lord Soulis was troubled, and the fear of coming evil sat heavy on his heart. He wandered to and fro on the battlements of his castle, anxiously looking for the approach of his retainers, who had followed in pursuit of the followers of Branxholm's heir. But the sun set, and the twilight drew on, and still they came not; and it was drawing towards midnight when a solitary horseman spurred his jaded steed towards the castle gate. Soulis admitted him with his own hand into the court-yard; and, ere the rider had dismounted, he inquired of him, hastily, and in a tone of apprehension—

'Where be thy fellows, knave? and why come alone?'

'Pardon me, my lord,' said the horseman, falteringly, as he dismounted; 'thy faithful bondsman is the bearer of evil tidings.'

'Evil! slave!' exclaimed Soulis, striking him as he spoke, 'speak ye of evil to me? What of it?—where are thy fellows?'

The man trembled, and added—'In pursuing the followers of Branxholm, they sought refuge in the wilds of Tarras, and being ignorant of the winding paths through its bottomless morass, horses and men have been buried in it—they who sank not fell beneath the swords of those they had pursued, and I only have escaped.'

'And wherefore did ye escape, knave?' cried the fierce sorcerer—'why did ye live to remind me of the shame of the house of Soulis?' And, as he spoke, he struck the trembling man again.

He hurried to the haunted dungeon, and again performed his incantations, with impatience in his manner and fury in his looks. Thrice he violently struck the chest, and thrice he exclaimed, impetuously—

'Spirit! come forth!—arise and speak with me!'

The lid was lifted up, and a deep and angry voice said—'Mortal! wherefore hast thou summoned me before the time I commanded thee? Was not thy wish granted? Steel shall not wound thee—cords bind thee—hemp hang thee—nor water drown thee. Away!'

'Stay' exclaimed Soulis—'add, nor fire consume me!'

'Ha! ha!' cried the spirit, in a fit of horrid laughter, that made even the sorcerer tremble—'*Beware of a coming wood!*' And, with a loud clang, the lid of the chest fell, and the noise as of thunder beneath his feet was repeated.

'Beware of a coming wood!' muttered Soulis to himself; 'what means the fiend?'

He hastened from the dungeon without locking the door behind him, and, as he hurried from it, he drew the key from his bosom, and flung it over his left shoulder; crying, 'Keep it, spirit!'

He shut himself up in his chamber, to ponder on the words of his familiar, and on the extirpation of his followers; and he thought not of Marion and her bridegroom until daybreak, when, with a troubled and a wrathful countenance, he entered the apartment where they were fettered.

'How now, fair maiden?' he began; 'hast thou considered well my words?---wilt thou be my willing bride, and let young Branxholm live? or refuse, and look thy fill on his smooth face, as his head adorns the point of my good spear?'

'Rather than see her thine,' exclaimed Walter, 'I would thou shouldst hew me in pieces, and fling my mangled body to your hounds.'

'Troth! and 'tis no bad thought,' said the sorcerer; 'thou mayest have thy wish. Yet, boy, ye think that I have no mercy: I will teach thee that I have, and refined mercy too. Now, tell me truly, were I in thy power as thou art in mine, what fate would ye award to Soulis?'

'Then, truly,' replied Walter, 'I would hang thee on the highest tree in Branxholm woods.'

'Well spoken, young Strong-bow,' returned Soulis; 'and I will shew thee, though ye think I have no mercy, that I am more merciful than thou. Ye would choose for me the highest tree, but I shall *give thee the choice of the tree from which you may prefer your body to hang*, and from whose top the owl may sing its midnight song, and to which the ravens shall gather for a feast. And thou, pretty face, added he, turning to Marion, 'sith you will not, even to save him, give me thine hand, i' faith if I may not be thy husband, I will be thy priest and celebrate your marriage, for I will bind your hands together, and ye shall hang on the next branch to him.'

'For that I thank thee,' said the undaunted maiden.

He then called together his four remaining armed men, and placing halters round the necks of his intended victims, they were dragged forth to the woods around the Hermitage where Walter was to choose the fatal tree.

Now a deep mist covered the face of the earth, and they could perceive no object at the distance of half a bow-shot before them; and, ere he had approached the wood where he was to carry his merciless project into execution—

'The wood comes towards us! exclaimed one of his followers.

'What!—*the wood comes!*' cried Soulis, and his cheek became pale, and he thought on the words of the demon—'*Beware of a coming wood!*'—and, for a time, their remembrance, and the forest that seemed to advance before him, deprived his arm of strength, and his mind of resolution, and, before his heart recovered, the followers of the house of Branxholm, to the number of fourscore, each bearing a tall branch of a rowan-tree in their hands,* as a charm against his sorcery, perceived, and, raising a loud shout, surrounded him.

The cords with which the arms of Marion and Walter were bound were instantly cut asunder. But, although the odds against him were as twenty to one, the daring Soulis defied them all. Yea, when his followers were overpowered, his single arm dealt death around. Now, there was not a day passed that complaints were not brought to King Robert, from those residing on the Borders, against Lord Soulis, for his lawless oppression, his cruelty, and his wizard-craft. And, one day, there came before the monarch, one after another, some complaining that he had brought diseases on their cattle, or destroyed their houses by fire, and a third, that he had stolen away the fair bride of Branxholm's heir; and they stood before the King, and begged to know what should be done unto him. Now, the King was wearied with their importunities and complaints, and he exclaimed, peevishly and unthinkingly—'*Boil him, if you please, but let me hear no more about him.*' But,

> —'It is the curse of kings to be attended
> By slaves that take their humour for a warrant;'

and, when the enemies of Soulis heard these words from the

* It is probable that the legend of the "*coming wood*," referred to in the tradition respecting Lord Soulis, is the same as that from which Shakspeare takes Macbeth's charm—

"Till Birnam wood shall come to Dunsinane."

The circumstances are similar.

lips of the King, they hastened away to put them in execution; and with them they took a wise man, one who was learned in breaking the spells of sorcery,* and with him he carried a scroll, on which was written the secret wisdom of Michael the Wizard; and they arrived before Hermitage Castle, while its lord was contending single-handed against the retainers of Branxholm, and their swords were blunted on his buckler, and his body received no wounds. They struck him to the ground with their lances; and they endeavoured to bind his hands and his feet with cords, but his spell snapped them asunder as threads.

'Wrap him in lead,' cried the wise man, 'and boil him therewith, according to the command of the king; for water and hempen cords have no power over his sorcery.'

Many ran towards the castle, and they tore the lead from the turrets, and they held down the sorcerer, and rolled the sheets around him in many folds, till he was powerless as a child, and the foam fell from his lips in the impotency of his rage. Others procured a caldron, in which it was said many of his incantations were performed, and the cry was raised—

'Boil him on the Nine-stane rig!'

And they bore him to where the stones of the Druids are to be seen till this day, and the two stones are yet pointed out from which the caldron was suspended. They kindled piles of faggots beneath it, and they bent the living body of Soulis within the lead; and thrust it into the caldron, and, as the flames arose, the flesh and the bones of the wizard were consumed in the boiling lead.—Such was the doom of Soulis.

The King sent messengers to prevent his hasty words being carried into execution, but they arrived too late.

In a few weeks there was mirth and music, and a marriage feast in the bowers of Branxholm, and fair Marion was the bride."

THE ONE-ARMED TAR.

Old Tom Moffat was the finest fragment of a jolly, good-natured, fearless seaman, that I ever met with. I say a fragment of a man; for he was *minus* his right arm. It was pleasant to look upon his merry old face, and to see his flaxen locks descending over his brow in sea-made ringlets; for, though he was turned threescore, there was not a grey hair upon his head. He appeared like an image of contentment, that envious mortals had deprived of an arm, and left him laughing at their malignity. But, above all—though Tom was neither given to the throwing of the hatchet, nor the spinning of long yarns—it was delightful, when he was about half-a-sheet in the wind, to hear him relate a few scraps of his history.

"Ay! ay!" he would say, "I have been in some rum scenes, and encountered some rough squalls in my time—but no matter: I am now sailing-master Moffat, with five and sixpence a-day—and no mistake; and a pension for the loss of my fin into the bargain. I am as comfortable and happy as any two-handed man in the three kingdoms. But, if you wish to know my history, all that's worth telling of't is soon told. I was born in Hexham. My mother was a naval officer's widow, and her father a clergyman. I say she was a widow, because my father died before I was born. I had a sister, but I do not remember her; and I was brought up by my mother beneath the roof of her father. He was a good but severe old man, and I tried to like him, but I could not, for I shook as I heard him cry—'Thomas.' He gave me a good education, and wished to make a parson of me, though I don't think I was any more parson-like then than I am now, and that's not much, I take it. The old man didn't belong to the Church—he was a Dissenter; and he persevered in his determination of making me a preacher. Therefore, when I was about sixteen, he called me into his study, and informed me that he intended sending me through to Edinburgh to attend the classes. He even spoke of my succeeding to the pulpit which he occupied; and he spoke till he brought the salt water into my eyes, and almost upon my cheeks, of living to see me preach in it! I had no ambition for the honours which he seemed to have in store for me. However, as he was rather too strict a disciplinarian for me, I offered no objections to his plan of sending me to Edinburgh. I thought it would free me from the restraint under which he kept me, and that was all I knew about the matter; though, like an ungrateful dog as I was, I did not thank the old man as I ought to have done.

Now, my grandfather had a watch—it was not a gold one, but it was a very excellent silver one, and it had a gold chain and seals attached to it—it had been presented to him as a token of respect on the day of his ordination, by a family in which he had been for six years tutor and chaplain. And, on the day of my departure, when I had kissed my mother's cheek and felt her lips upon mine—for I loved her as I did my own soul, and she deserved it all—the old man took my hand, and he pulled the watch from his fob, and he put it into my hand, chains, seals, and all, and—

'Take this, Thomas,' said he, 'for your grandfather's sake; and, as often as ye look at it, remember that time is precious—spend it not in vain.'

If I never loved the old man before, I believed that I loved him then. For presents are excellent temporary openers of the heart, either of man or woman. If your sweetheart be shy, it is wonderful how a present will molify her—but it is not the real thing; and her seeming affection, so produced, won't stand the test, or be of long duration. I have been a sailor, and foolish enough in my day, but I tell you, if you wish a girl to love you sincerely and truly, never attempt to win her heart by the offer of bribes. Give a heart for a heart, and nothing more, till you have her hand too, and then give as much as you like.

But, as I was telling you, I set out for Edinburgh with my grandfather's watch in my pocket, and I pulled it out, either to see the hour, or admire my property, during every half hour on the journey. And, I believe, though I did shed tears when he gave it, that, before I was half way to Edinburgh, I had forgot the giver in the gift. However, the first session passed on tolerably enough. I was not kept upon short allowance; but, though I did not want for victuals, I had not a sixpence of pocket-money, and I felt this the more, because I thought that some of my fellow-students perceived my circumstances, and despised me on account of them.

I returned home honoured with a prize, and received the caresses of my mother and the congratulations of my grandfather. The old man predicted bright days for me—already, in imagination, he beheld me in the pulpit which he had occupied for thirty years.

But, with his first session, ended the prudence of Tom Moffat and his grandfather's hopes. About the end of the second, a circumstance occurred which put a stop to my studies for twelve months, if not for ever. The people with whom I had lodged during the first year, were about to emigrate to America. Their name was Lindsay, and they had a daughter called Margaret, a beautiful girl of seventeen. I never saw her but my blood ran at the rate of ten knots. During my second session, we used to walk in the Meadows, or around Duddingstone Loch, together, and I forsook the study of Greek and of Latin, to study the words that fell from the lips of Margaret Lindsay. But, as I was saying, they were about to emigrate to America, and I accompanied them to Leith and went on board the vessel with them. It

* Dr Leyden represents this personage as being "True Thomas, Lord of Ersylton;" but the Rhymer was dead before the time fixed by tradition of the death of Lord Soulis, which took place in the reign of Robert the Bruce, who came to the crown in 1308, and the Rhymer was dead before 1299, for, in that year, his son and heir granted a charter to the convent of Soltra, and in it he describes himself *Filius et hæres Thomæ Iiymour de Ercildon.*

was night when they sailed. Margaret and I were sitting in a corner below, away from her parents and the rest of the passengers, unseen, and talking words of tenderness together. She promised never to forget me—I never to forget her. I intended to accompany her out into the Firth, and to return on shore with the pilot. But we knew not how time moved on. We were loath to part, and I noted not that the vessel was under weigh. In truth, I had never been on board of one before. But, lo! her parents called upon Margaret, and there sat she with my hand across her shoulders—and the vessel not only beyond Leith Roads, but out of the Firth! There was I, a penniless and involuntary passenger across the Atlantic. It was a glorious situation for a student to be placed in! But the idea of enjoying Margaret's company reconciled me to it. My mind was made up at once, and I went to the commander of the vessel and offered to make myself useful during the voyage. He agreed to the proposal, and I began to take my first lessons in seamanship.

We arrived at Quebec, and, after accompanying the girl I loved for more than three thousand miles, it was hard to part from her, and I wished to go up the country with her father. But he would not hear of the scheme. He said that I must go back to my friends; and the master, having found me of service on my passage out, told me that he considered himself accountable for me, and that he must take me back to Leith.

I will not bother you with an account of my parting with Margaret, nor of her distress, poor thing. More than forty years have passed, and I never think of it without feeling, I can't tell how, until this day. Neither will I tell you about our passage home—there was nothing particular in it. My mother received me as if I had risen from the dead—her joy was unbounded—she hung upon my neck and wept for hours; and, though I did not escape several lectures from my grandfather, he was not so severe upon me as I anticipated. But I said nothing to either him or my mother of Margaret Lindsay.

Such was my second session; and my third and last was more unfortunate. As I was now becoming a lad, my grandfather became more liberal, and he allowed me a shilling a week for pocket-money. But, during the very first month of the session, a fellow-student advised me to accompany him to the theatre. I had never been in one; and, besides the amusement, he said we should receive a lesson in elocution. I needed but little persuasion to accompany him, and we went to the pit together. Two young ladies took their seats beside us. They were wondrous affable, and one of them was almost as beautiful as Margaret Lindsay. I sometimes thought they were too affable; but then they were polite—very polite—and they smiled so sweetly, and thanked me so kindly for every answer I was able to give to their inquiries, that I could not think evil of them. They wished us good night at the door of the theatre, and my friend and I proceeded to our lodgings. But, as we were passing along the South Bridge—

'Moffat,' says he to me, 'what's the clock?'

I put my hand to my watch pocket, but neither seals nor watch were there. I remembered having had it in my hand, between the play and the farce, in the theatre. I thought I should have fallen dead upon the street. A blindness came over my eyes. I heard the voice of my grandfather crying in my ears—'Thomas! Thomas!—reprobate! reprobate!'

We gave information to the watchmen at the police-office, and at the houses where such articles are received. But, *presto!*—my grandfather's watch, chain, and seals, were gone. They had vanished like a rainbow, and were nowhere to be found. Every succeeding day of the session was one of agony and reproach. I learned no more. If I opened a page, imagination heard the ticking of my grandfather's watch and it ticked in my ears eternally; or, as I strove to read, I put down my finger and thumb mechanically, to fumble with the chain and the seals, and they rubbed against each other, and I started and cried—'What shall I do for the watch?'

With a heavy and foreboding heart, and a countenance that bespoke disaster, I returned to Hexham. My welcome was beyond my deserving; but supper-time came, and my grandfather, my mother, and myself, sat in his little parlour.

'What o'clock is it, Thomas, dear?' said she, kindly.

Had she driven a knife to my heart, I would have taken it as kind. I faltered—I ventured a reply. My grandfather observed my hesitation, and he inquired—'Where is your watch, *sir*—the watch which I gave you?' He laid particular emphasis on the latter part of his question—my confusion increased, and I stammered out some excuse about its being in my chest, I believed. 'You believe no such thing, sir,' said my grandfather, sternly; 'go bring it instantly.' I saw the storm gathering on his brow. I perceived that he not only suspected the truth, but believed me more guilty than I was. I left the room, as if to go to my own apartment for the watch; but, scarce knowing what I did, I left the house by the garden door, and took the road towards Newcastle. Before I had proceeded a mile, my resolution was taken to go to sea.

I reached Newcastle before the inhabitants were astir. You may suppose that my experience in the manual duties of a seaman were not great, being merely what I acquired in a trip across the Atlantic and back again. But I had a love for the sea, and had learned readily. I knew that the clothes which I wore were not likely to procure me a berth, and I resolved, as soon as the shops should open, to offer them to a second-hand dealer, in exchange for the garb of a sailor.

About seven o'clock I was wandering along what is called the Close, on the look-out for a shop where I should be likely to get an exchange of rigging, when, seeing a street of almost perpendicular stairs, on each side of which were dealers in old clothes shoes, and such like, I ascended it saying to myself—'This is my shop.' I entered one of the cells, shops, or call them what you like, the proprietress of which had already been at her morning libations. She received me with a low curtsey, and as sweet a smile as her deep rosy face was capable of expressing. On making known my proposal, the smile vanished from her face quicker than the sun is hidden by a cloud in a hurricane. She surveyed me from head to foot, as a sergeant would examine a recruit, and turning me unceremoniously round, inquired—'And how much wilt thou gie me t' boot?'

Her whole stock of old clothes, shoes, marine stores, and other *et ceteras*, were not worth five pounds, while my coat alone had cost three, not three weeks before.

'Nothing,' replied I.

'Nothing! thou scoomy robber o' the dead!' cried my fair dealer in second-hand garments. 'Dost think I steal my gudes? Nothing!—Be off!' I was retiring from the tempest, when she grasped me by the tails of the coat, adding—'Coom back; let me syee what I can de wi' thee.'

She then spread out a patched blue jacket, an old Guernsey frock, and a pair of canvass trousers.

'Now, these will fit ye t' a tee,' continued she, 'or I'm a Dutchman! But, upon my word, thou shud gie me sum mut t' boot, my canny lad.'

The wide aperture serving for a window, was without frame or glass, and the folding-door was so hung around with the principal stock of the shop, and barricadeed with boots, shoes, and such like, that it could not be shut till night; and, on my inquiring for an apartment to change my dress—

Jemmy Johnson!' exclaimed she, bursting into laughter 'that's a gud un!—where did ye get yur modesty? Did ye steal the claes, that ye are afraid to be seen? My fyeth! I dinna knaw but the constaples may be here for them before night yet! I had better mind what I'm deein', else I'll lose baith gudes and character.'

Making a virtue of necessity, I equipped myself as quickly as possible; and, with a hurried step, hastened to the quay. Without stopping, I proceeded to North Shields, where I went on board a collier, and inquired for the skipper. I was directed down to the cabin, and there I found sitting a jolly, fear-nothing, merry little fellow, penning a love epistle to his owner's daughter. On applying to him for a berth—

'Why, I don't know but I may gie thee one,' said he; 'thou's a gud-looking young chap, like mysel. Was ye ever in the coal trade afore?' 'No,' answered I. 'I might hae seen that by the whiteness o' thy hands,' said he. 'Where did ye sar your time?'

I told him I had been in the American trade.

'Well,' continued he, 'I canna engage ye by the run, but by the month; and I'se no gaun to ask ye if ye can hand, reef, and steer, and splice a rope, and them land-lubberish sort o' questions; but only, I maun tell ye, when ye are at the helm, if the watch sing out, "Ship a-head!" dinna ye mind a pin; but, if the other doesn't ship about, run right athwart the lubber's hawse, and learn him better manners: that's wur way o' deein'. Let him knaw it was his duty to stand clear o' a fire-ship.——But, I say, are ye a gud writer?' 'Rather good,' said I.

'Shiver me,' said he, 'then yur just the chap for me! I want a bit letter here for a sweetheart o' mine, man; but, smash me! I can't flourish it off at all. Try thy fist at it, mate. Maybe ye can dee a bit at the inditing, tee—for, ye see, she's been at the boarding-school; and, drat me, though I can manage the spelling pretty hobbling, wi' looking at the dictioner for the words, yet I knaw nought about their grammar. Now, I say, if ye understand it, gie her a gud deal o' grammar in't. That's the way to dee their business! Conscience! had my faither keept me another year at the school, I would married a duchess.'

I now entered upon the honourable office of confidential secretary to the skipper of a collier. On finishing the letter, I read it to him; and, on hearing it, he danced round the cabin in ecstasy, exclaiming—'Blow me, if that wunna dee, nought will. I say, if ye turn out as gud a seaman as ye are a scholar, I will make ye my mate, and that's all.'

I thus became a favourite with the skipper from the first; and, not being a bad-natured fellow—though I say it myself---I soon became a favourite with the crew also. I sailed in the collier during three years, and, in that time, I had obtained the forgiveness of my mother---but the countenance of my grandfather never. He cut me off as a prodigal.

But there was one night that about half-a-dozen of us were upon the lark, as we called it---battling the watchmen, and seeing life in London, and, upon the whole, making more mirth than mischief, when, as luck would have it, we ran foul of a press-gang upon Tower Hill. 'What cheer, my hearties?' cried the Luff who headed the gang.

Some of our party took to their heels, but I stood still; for I didn't care a toss-up of a copper about the matter. I was just as willing to serve the king as another man, if he would pay me for it. So I surrendered at discretion, and the lieutenant called me a 'fine fellow' for so doing. 'Ah, you old shark!' thinks I, 'your purser's grin won't gammon Tom Moffat.'

One of my mates who attempted to run was brought back; and, from my heart I was sorry for him, for he had a wife and four little ones; and I suppose they might sink or swim, live or starve, for all that the service into which he was impressed would see, say, or care, about the matter. Confound me! after all, impressment is too bad. It's a black shame to the navy. It has broken more hearts than ever it made heroes. Why drag away a man, like a dog at a cart tail, against his will? Again I say, it is a shame all over! Why not give better pay, and clear the decks for promotion. Then they would get men---good men, willing men—and the navy would be what it ought to be. I can't away with impressment.

However, I was taken on board the tender in the river, and, in three or four days, joined a seventy-four off Portsmouth. I liked the service well enough, for our Captain was the very model of what an officer ought to be. He was none of your fresh-water, courtly puppies, who are sent to officer the navy because their fathers or their mothers are doing dirty work for the government people on shore. He was none of your butterflies, recommended by a Lord of the Admiralty, and promoted over the heads of better men, because their relations have Court influence. This system is as bad as impressment, every whit. It takes away both heart and hope from a man. Is it not hard for a brave fellow, who has been a lieutenant for ten years, and been in twice ten actions, and behaved nobly in all, to have to lift his hat to a puppy to-day as his superior officer, who was a middy beneath him yesterday? I say it is a shame. Fair play is a jewel; and there should be no promotion but what service and merit procure. But I do say that my old commander was a man every inch of him. He is getting well up the list now, and I hope to live to see him an admiral.

I had a little library on board the collier; and, amongst my books, which my old skipper brought on board the tender to me himself, was a copy of the Iliad---not Pope's translation, but the original. It was my favourite book. My shipmates marvelled at it, they regarded me as a sort of prodigy, and swore I would be a post-captain some day; and they were wont to look over my shoulder as I read, and point with their finger to a particular word or letter, and inquire---'Tom, what does that mean?'---or, 'What does that stand for?'---and replying, when I answered them---'Blow me, but that's funny!'

At length, they began to call me 'Greek Tom!' and the name coming to the Captain's ears, he inquired the meaning of it; and, upon being informed, he sent for me aft; and says he---'Moffat, what's this I hear of you?---you a Greek scholar, eh?' 'Yes, your honour,' said I.

'The deuce you are!' said he. And he began to put some questions to me, which he found I was more able to answer than he was to ask.

'Well, my good fellow,' he continued, 'you are out of your proper sphere at present---that's all that I can say.' And he began to ask me about my history and relations; and I told him everything, not even omitting my trip to America, and the loss of my grandfather's watch. 'Well, I must see what I can do for you,' said he. And at first he made me a sort of schoolmaster on board, and afterwards his clerk or secretary. He treated me like a brother.

We had been in two or three actions, and had had a fair run of prizes, when we were sent upon the American station We were lying off Newbury Port, which is about a hundred miles from Boston, and I went ashore for letters. I reached the post-office, and, as I tapped at the window, and the tin pane was withdrawn---eyes and limbs!---whose face---I say, whose face d'ye think I should see, but that of my own sweet and never-forgotten Margaret Lindsay! It was like a pistol-shot in my heart---I was more dead than alive; and she---why, she fell back with a scream; and her father rushed into the office, and again to the door, to see what had alarmed his daughter. He beheld me as much alarmed as her, but he knew me in a twinkling. He took my hand, and led me into the house. What passed I won't tell you. I found Margaret was not married, but she was more beautiful than ever. We didn't speak much, but our eyes said a thousand things.

On going on board, I told my commander all that happened. He was, indeed, a good soul, and a considerate one. He saw which way the land lay with me; and, as we were cruising upon the station, and Newbury Port was a sort of rendezvous, he gave me permission to remain a month on shore. I blessed him in my heart, and I could have embraced his knees.

My mother had been dead for several years—my pay was more than I required—I had nobody to assist out of my

prize-money; so that I had saved a trifle. I went ashore therefore, to spend a month with Margaret, with my pockets pretty comfortably lined. Why, the month was like a dream—it was like sailing round a romantic coast in fine weather. But, before three weeks of it had passed, I prevailed on Margaret to accompany me to the church, and we became man and wife; and her father offered no objections.

I found it hard to part with her; and, at her entreaty, I would have given up the sea—but then I was in prospect of being made sailing-master—and that was what I call having my bread baked for life.

But—not to spin my yarn too long or too fine—some months after my marriage, we were ordered upon another station; and, a little before the orders arrived, a letter from my wife informed me that I was about to become a father. I longed to return to her, to fling my arms around her neck, and to kiss the cheek of our little one. But fate had ordered it otherwise. We left the station, and we attacked one of the French islands in the West Indies. Two boats' crews of us went ashore to storm their batteries. We had already made a sort of breach, and I was resolved to be one of the first to mount it—for I was determined to obtain my promotion to the rank of sailing-master if anything in my power could do it. I was the first, and I believe the only one. I was surrounded, wounded, made prisoner, and, for seven years, I was shut up in a French prison, without hearing of either wife or child, and very little of my country, or how the game went on.

At length a change of prisoners took place, and I was one of them. On the first day of my liberty, I wrote to my wife, and I wrote also to my old commander. Within six months, I received an appointment as sailing-master; but months and months passed on, and I heard not a syllable concerning my wife. It made me miserable, and my promotion couldn't cheer me. I left no stone unturned to discover where she was, or whether she were dead or living; but it was of no effect. Nothing could I hear concerning her; and many a tear have I shed on the deep sea, and at the dead of night, for her sake.

Such was the state of suspense I was in for eleven years after my promotion as sailing-master. About that time, our vessel had a turn-up with a French ship of the line, and a frigate; and, at the very close of the action, when one of them, in fact, had struck her colours, a shot carried away my right arm. But, as I told you, I have a pension for it. But it soon healed, and I quitted the service. I went to America, and to Newbury Port, to inquire after my wife, my child, (if I had one,) and her parents. And there, all that I could learn was—that her father had died fifteen years ago, and that my wife, with an infant daughter, had gone to England. I re-crossed the Atlantic in the first vessel I could find. I determined to search for her through every town and village in the three kingdoms. On landing, I found that my old commander was also on shore. He felt for me, and he did everything in his power to assist me; and we got paragraphs, setting forth all the particulars, inserted into all the newspapers, and they were copied into the papers throughout the country. What could I do more?

Well, about two months after I had been in England, a dejected, but beautiful young creature, with a child in her arms, came to my lodgings and inquired for me.

Heaven and earth! how I started!—how I trembled!—how my heart throbbed, when I gazed upon her countenance, for it bore the engraven lineaments of my wife. Scarce could I speak to her. A tide of feelings swelled in my bosom, as though my heart would burst. I thought—I feared a thousand things in a moment.

She wept; she told me that she had heard of my paragraph in the newspapers. That the circumstances related seemed to connect her with me—that her father's name was Moffat—that he had married her mother at Newbury Port—and other things she stated which the newspapers mentioned not. 'God bless thee, my child! my lost one!' cried I. And I flung my arms around the neck of the poor, weeping, and forlorn being. Her cheeks bespoke want, and her eyes misery. I ordered wine. I seated her on a sofa beside me. I took her child in my arm and I kissed it; but I saw the agony that was heaving in my daughter's breast, and I feared to ask her concerning its father. I saw that all was not right. 'And where is thy mother, love?' said I—'Oh! does she live?

'Yes! yes!—she lives!—she lives!' sobbed my poor child, and placed her hands before her face and wept bitterly. 'She lives!—she lives!' she repeated; 'but I cannot meet my dear mother again.'

'My Margaret, then, lives!' said I; 'thank Heaven! But weep not, my own child—my sweet one, do not weep. I am your father. I will protect you. Tell me your story; and, by Heaven! my girl, if you have been injured, I will avenge your wrongs.'

But she wept more bitterly. I at length learned that my Margaret resided in Scotland, and that my daughter, against her mother's will, had, while a mere girl, married a thoughtless young man, with whom she had come to London, and who had now all but forsaken her.

I desired to know where I might see him, without his knowing who I was; and, receiving the information I sought, I found him with a dozen others, thoughtless as himself, at a billiard table. One-armed and left-handed as I was, I played with the best of them; and, without discovering my name, I endeavoured to ingratiate myself into the good opinion of my hopeful son-in-law; and I succeeded. I found him more thoughtless than depraved. He was not beyond reformation; and I asked him home to sup with me, and the invitation was accepted.

There was a frankness in his manner that gave me hope of him. During supper, I endeavoured to sail round him, and to cast the anchor of contrition in his heart. Without directly stating my object, or giving him reason to suspect what my intentions were, 'I spoke daggers' to his conscience, 'but I used none;' and, when I saw that I had brought him to the right point, like King David before Nathan, to pass his own condemnation, I rang the bell, and his wife and child entered the room. But I extended to him my solitary hand in forgiveness, and gave him a father's greeting. My scheme succeeded; and, from that day until this, he has been a husband of whom my daughter has had no cause to be ashamed.

But the next day we all took our passage for Scotland where I was to meet my long-lost Margaret. Every mile of our passage seemed a league, every hour a day. But we landed at Leith; and, without stopping there an hour, I hired a coach, and we proceeded to Roxburghshire, where she resided. It was mid-day; the coach drew up at the door. My daughter and her child were first handed out, then followed her husband, and I heard a scream of joy as my dear wife beheld her child. But she had just reached the door, with open arms, to welcome her, when I too stepped upon the street. I hurried forward—

'Margaret!' I cried; 'my Margaret!'

'Thomas!—my husband! my husband!' she exclaimed, and she flew to meet me.

We had been parted for more than nineteen years, but we have never been separated an hour from that day until this. We are contented as the summer day is long—and, once for all, I say, I am as happy as any two-handed man in his Majesty's dominions."

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE POACHER'S PROGRESS.

THE poacher is a common character; and, although there is no guilt in his occupation itself, yet he who is in the every-day practice of breaking the laws of man, from the very habits and fears attendant upon such practice, unconsciously becomes ready to break the laws of his Maker. The sin is as small on the part of a poor man killing a bird or a leveret for gain, as on the part of a rich man killing it for amusement. Yet I have seldom known a confirmed poacher who did not eventually become a person of reckless and desperate character. His living in the constant fear of detection—the jeopardy of his calling—the secrecy of his actions—insensibly blunt and destroy his better feelings and principles; and I have often thought that our game-laws are laws made for the amusement of the rich, at the expense of the morals of the poor. But, to drop this, I shall briefly sketch the progress of a poacher.

Adam Black was the son of a farmer of the old school, who rented some hundred acres near a part of the debatable grounds between Roxburgh and Northumberland. Adam received a respectable education; but he was of idle habits from his boyhood upwards. It is but seldom that we hear much good of a person who is given to idleness; and we have a proverb that says, "If the devil find a man idle, he generally sets him to work." There is much truth in the adage. Yet, it may almost be said, that, instead of being tempted, an idle man actually holds out a temptation to the tempter—he invites him to his destruction. I have said, however, that Adam Black was idle from his youth. When he became a lad, no portion of his thoughts was given to the business of the farm. Give Adam his dog and his gun, and that was all he desired, all he cared for. He turned a deaf ear to the admonitions of his father, and the counsels of his mother were laughed at. His gun by day, and his gins or his snares by night, were the sole occupants of his thoughts. But as yet he was not vicious; and his only faults were, that he was given to idleness and poaching. He, perhaps, had a redeeming quality in the warmness of his heart, if it was not more than counterbalanced by the excess of his passions; for he was headstrong, vehement, revengeful.

At the age of three and twenty, and while he yet lived with his father, Adam married. His parents offered no opposition to his wishes, for the object of his choice was a maiden of sweet and gentle disposition, and of blameless character; and, though poor, they trusted that her influence would arouse their son to habits of industry and exertion. Some said that she had made a good match, because, being the daughter of a simple shepherd, she had married the only son of a farmer; but there were others who observed more closely, and who saw deeper, that shook their heads, and said, "she was too good for his wife." But it is frequently difficult to account for a woman's affections; the cause that produced them is often mysterious, as their depth is intense. A thousand bards have sung of WOMAN'S LOVE; and, although

> "nae poet in a sense,
> But just a rhymer like, by chance,"

I shall interrupt my story for a minute's space, to sing of it also.

> Say not it is the flickering flame
> That all have felt—that all must feel—
> Which comes, and goeth as it came—
> That fleeteth, changeth, as the wheel
> Of caprice or young fancy turns;
> Nay, 'tis the strong, the deep emotion
> Of the full heart whose fixed devotion
> Through adverse fate and coldness burns,
> That marks a woman's love.
>
> Oh, 'tis a glad, a holy glow—
> An angel's dream—a seraph's bliss—
> A theft from heavenly joy to know—
> To feel, to own, to know but this:
> That there is one—a lovely one—
> The life, the partner of our being—
> Who, all our faults and follies seeing,
> Can love, and love but us alone,
> With all a woman's love.
>
> Within her bosom is a fire
> That burneth with a light divine,
> Which, when opposing ills conspire
> To cloud the soul, will burst—will shine
> Within, around—and joyous throw
> A ray of hope o'er him she loveth,
> Till heaven the kindred flame approveth,
> And half the pain of fate—of wo,
> Is lost in woman's love.

Such a woman became the wife of Adam Black; but although he was proud of her love, though he was conscious of it and jealous of it, he had not principle enough within him to appreciate it. She, therefore, produced no abiding change upon his habits; and although, in a measure, he was broken from them for a time, within three months he returned to them as the swine doth to its wallowing in the mire. For some weeks she occupied his thoughts, and her words had influence; but he returned again to his dog and to his gun—her counsel became irksome—he received it peevishly, and he thought as little of her as of his duties on the farm.

Within the first year after his marriage his mother died; and, in the third year, a paralytic stroke fell upon his father, as though Death had tapped him on the shoulder, saying—"Come." The old man felt that his days were numbered—that the last warning had been given; and he called his son to his bedside, and said—

"Adam! I am about to leave you; and, O man, will ye listen to a faither's dying advice?"

"Yes, faither! yes!" cried Adam—for I have said that he was warm-hearted—and he wept as he spoke.

"Oh, then, my son," continued the old man, "hearken to my last words—the last words o' yer faither, Adam. I dinna say that ye are vicious, but, oh! ye hae been thoughtless—ye are far from what I would wish to see ye. It isna meikle that I hae to leave ye; but if ye dinna take care o't, it will waste frae amang yer hands like snaw aff a dike. Ye are now also a faither, and a young family are rising around ye; and, oh, for their sakes, and for the sake o' the mother that bore them, see that ye set them the example o' a Christian, that they may not rise up as wit-

nesses against you at the great day. Do ye hear me, Adam? O my son, say that ye will follow your faither's dying injunction, and I will die in peace."

Adam wrung his father's hand, and hid his face upon the bed to conceal his agony. "It is enough," said the dying man—"thank God, the voice of conscience is not dumb in the breast of my bairn!"

On the death of his father, Adam became the occupier of the farm; but he neglected it, and I need not say that, in return, fortune neglected him. His fields and his crops became a jest among his neighbours, and the former they called "Idle Adam's pleasure-grounds." But the lease expired, and, because he had been a slothful tenant, the landlord refused to renew it.

The money which his father had left him, was reduced to about a hundred pounds, when he was compelled to leave the farm, and he removed with his family to a small cottage which stood on the road-side, in a lonely part of the country, and about ten miles from the farm on which he had been brought up. Here Adam took up his abode, as though the hundred pounds would provide for his family for ever.

He did nothing, save to prowl about behind the hedges with his gun over his arm, or, in the dead of night, to rob the preserves of the gentlemen in the neighbourhood. His poor wife strove anxiously, and with tears, to reclaim him—to arouse him to honest exertion. She reminded him of the destitution that was creeping around them, and every day narrowing its circle. She drew her infant children round his knees, and implored him to provide for them. But his answer was, "We shall do well enough—I will be my own master."

"Ay," replied she, "and the slave of the law!"

"Hang the law!" returned he; "what care I for the law!"

For a time their cottage had an appearance of cleanliness and neatness, but gradually it began to exhibit the marks of poverty and wretchedness, as her spirit broke, and she found her love lost, and her counsel of no avail. Old garments supplied the place of glass in one-half of the window—the well-scoured and sanded threshold was no longer visible, but stagnant water lay in little pools before the door, and around them ragged and squalid children quarrelled with each other.

They were sent to no school—it was but little instruction that their mother could give them; and the little she endeavoured to give, the example of their father destroyed. The only education they received was such as would enable them to become poachers like himself; and before the eldest was seven years of age, he was sent to the neighbouring towns to sell the game which his father had destroyed.

People wondered how Adam Black lived, for he wrought none; and although they knew him to be a poacher, they could not see how by such means he provided food for himself and family. And although his children were in rags, and his wife never seen, his appearance approached what might be termed respectable. He wore a large velvet coat, made after the fashion of a sportsman's, and, in general, his vest and trousers were of the same material. Every day his voice was heard in the ale-house of a neighbouring village, and by his side, on such occasions, crouched a dog of the pointer breed—a living emblem of hunger and leanness.

But famine often pressed hard upon his family; and when he would have wrought for them, no one would employ him; and once, when want gnawed at his heart, and remorse stung his soul, he would have lifted up his hand against his own life, had not the daughter of a Mr Nisbet, who was the clergyman of the parish, at the very moment, like an angel of mercy, visited the cottage, and, having heard of the destitution of its inmates, come to relieve them.

Such was the life of the poacher for several years, and as yet he had been guilty of no actual crime. He had carried on his trade without detection, defying the law, and laughing the landed proprietors around him, and their gamekeepers, to scorn. At length he was caught in the preserve of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, with three pheasants in the bag which he carried by his side. He resisted the attempt to seize him—he levelled his fowling-piece, and fired upon his assailants; but they were not injured, and it was believed that he did not fire with the wish of wounding them. He, however, was made prisoner, tried, and sentenced to transportation for seven years. No one made application for a mitigation of the punishment, and it was carried into effect.

On his departure, his neglected wife roused herself from the lethargy of despair which his habits had brought upon her spirit. She refused parish relief, and the farmers around admired her conduct and pitied her distress. She became washerwoman and laundress to all the respectable families around her; and when she had toiled as such in their houses, yet even at midnight the lamp was seen flickering in her cottage, and the stranger who passed it heard the busy sound of her spinning-wheel. She taught her little daughters to knit, and she sent them to gather wool amongst the whins and hedges. Her sons were employed on the surrounding farms, and each, in their turn, she sent for a quarter of a year to the parish school. The stagnant water was no longer seen at the door, but again there appeared the clean and sanded threshold—the old garments were removed from the windows, and glass supplied their place. She obtained the respect of all who knew her, and the pity they at first felt for her gave place to esteem. When the name of Janet Black was mentioned, it was ever said that "she deserved a better fate." Yet she often mourned to find that her influence was inadequate wholly to eradicate the habits which their father's example had instilled into his children.

But seven years passed, and Adam Black returned from being a convict in the hulks to his family. When he entered the cottage, Janet sprang up and received him with open arms. She had wept over his punishment, but she had trusted that it would effect a reformation of his propensities.—When she had called her children around him, and desired him to look now upon one, and now upon another, to observe how they had grown, and to tell him how they had wrought for her, and how one had become a scholar, and all could read, she again flung her arms around his neck, and said—

"And now, dear Adam, we shall a' be happy—for, after a', yours wasna a crime that we need hang our heads about—it was only what hundreds do daily—though it maybe wasna richt. But ye winna be looked down upon on account o't—for it wasna like stealing—and I'm sure I'll be able to get ye wark, for a' the gentry round hae been kind to us."

"Work!—ha!" muttered Adam sullenly; and he coldly acknowledged the tenderness of his wife.

She saw, she felt, that he cared not for her, and his indifference went to her heart. Yet she fondly trusted, by her affection, to win back his, and to lead him also to habits of industry. But her hope was vain. To be doomed to wear the felon's chain, and to mingle with convicts for years, may be a punishment, and it may make men worse than they were before the law condemned them; but that it can reform them is all but impossible. It had wrought no reformation on Adam Black, but it had rendered him more callous and more desperate; it had caused him to associate with wretches who made him acquainted with crimes of which he had never dreamed, and their habits gradually became his habits, and their thoughts his thoughts. He had been sent amongst felons for killing a pheasant, and he returned from amongst them capable of murdering a fellow-being.

Poor Janet shuddered at the words which she heard him utter—for, with strange and wicked oaths, he vowed vengeance on the individual who had prosecuted him; and she flung her arms around his neck, and kissed his forehead, yea, wept

before him, and prayed that he would be calm, and tenderly, earnestly urged upon him the duty of forgiveness to enemies; but at her entreaties, and the sight of her tenderness, he raged the more furiously.

"Away with your foolery, woman!" he exclaimed, pushing her rudely from him; "talk not of forgiveness to me! Have I not worn the chains with which they degraded me—worn them till the iron entered my flesh—yet you talk of forgiveness! Do not torment me—I shall be revenged!" And he uttered words which we cannot write.

He inquired for his gun; and when informed that it had been sold to clothe his children during his absence, he grated his teeth together, and his eyes flashed with indignation—but he said little. He had brought home a few pounds with him; and, on the day after his return, he visited the ale-house which had before been his habitual place of rendezvous. There also he purchased a fowling-piece from an acquaintance. He seized it eagerly in his hands; and, though he had manifested no joy at the sight of his wife and children, when he again handled his favourite instrument, he leaped upon the floor, he examined it in every part, he almost pressed it to his lips.

That very night he returned home laden with game.

"O Adam! Adam, man!" cried Janet, as he flung the birds upon the table, "have we no had enough o' this wark, think ye, yet? Has a' that ye hae suffered, and that we hae suffered, no been a lesson to ye? O Adam! will ye really persevere in this dangerous course until ye are torn frae your wife an' bairns again? O bairns!" added she, addressing her children, "for dearsake, tak thae birds out o' my sight—burn them!—bury them in the yard!—dinna let them remain beneath this roof! O Adam! for my sake—for the sake o' your family—gie owre this, an' I'll work for ye, dear—we'll a' work for ye, till the bluid run owre our finger-ends, if ye'll only be prevailed upon to desist frae such a practice."

"Wheesht, old fool!" said he, pushing her roughly aside; "get the birds dressed—it is long since I tasted the food I am fondest of."

"No, Adam—no!" returned she, firmly; "rather wad I cut my hands aff than touch a feather o' them."

"Idiot!" retorted he, stamping his foot and scowling upon her; and, ordering one of his daughters to prepare two of the birds for supper, the poor girl looked first anxiously at her mother, and then tremblingly at her father, and obeyed him.

Janet sat sorrowful and silent for a few moments, and tears ran down her cheeks. He to whom she had given her young affections, and from whom, unworthy as he was, her heart had never swerved, had looked upon her with coldness, he had spoken to her with anger and contempt—and these are hard things for a wife to bear. She had endured sorrow, she had suffered shame, for his sake, yet she felt his present treatment worse than all. Yet affection, and a desire for her husband's reformation and safety, prevailed over every other feeling, and she rose, her countenance expressive of anxious and imploring tenderness, and laid her hand on his, and said earnestly—

"Dear Adam!"

"Dear devil!" rejoined the monster, dashing away her hand, "has the woman parted with the little sense she ever had! See that the girl cook those birds right, and let me have none of your preaching."

She sat down in silence, and endeavoured, as she best could, to conceal the agony of a blighted heart.

He returned to his old courses—drinking by day, and poaching by night; and wasting not only the money which the game he destroyed produced, but the earnings also of his wife and family.

About twelve months after his return from banishment, the two oldest of his children fell sick of a fever and died; those that were left were unable to provide for themselves; and his heart-broken wife became feeble of body and almost imbecile of mind. Again the cottage bore the impress of wretchedness. About this time, also, sheep were frequently stolen from the flocks of the gentleman who had been accessary to his punishment. Adam was suspected, and his cottage was searched; but there was nothing found in it that could criminate him, though the conviction was strong on every mind that he was the depredator. At length want drove him from the cottage, and he removed no one knew where, taking his wife and children with him.

It has been mentioned that, at a time when Adam Black's family were in want, and when famine and remorse were goading him to destruction, their wants were relieved by the daughter of a Mr Nisbet, who was the clergyman of the parish. Now, it was about three years after the poacher had left the scene of his depredations, that Mr Nisbet proceeded to Edinburgh upon business, intending to return in a few days. But, day after day, his daughter looked for him in vain. He came not, and no tidings were heard concerning him. A messenger was dispatched to Edinburgh to inquire respecting him; and it was ascertained that he had left that city in a coach which passed within three miles of his manse, and there it was found that he had left it to proceed home on foot; but, beyond this, no trace of him could be found, though rewards were offered and diligent search made over the country. Many were the surmises regarding his fate, but his disappearance remained involved in mystery. Some, remembering the character of the poacher, and that suspicion would have attached to him, said—"Well, that is one thing Idle Adam is innocent of."

At the period of her father's disappearance, Mary Nisbet was not beyond the age when reason, though not immature, is least powerful, the world most alluring, and sorrow wildest. She had been suddenly deprived of her only protector, her only relative. But, educated as she had been—the sole child of a country clergyman, springing up like a solitary but lovely flower in the wilderness, concentrating in its own bright hues the colours of every ray that the sun scattered over the barren desert—she endeavoured, by the precepts her father had taught her, to subdue the intensity of her feelings; and, a few months after his disappearance, partly to beguile her grief, and partly from the hope of hearing something that might throw light upon his fate, she accepted an invitation to visit a friend in Leith.

To cheer her melancholy, her friends took her to visit every object of interest in and around the Modern Athens; though at that period it had not the same claims to the appellation that it has now. One object only remained unvisited, an object which few of her sex would be desirous of beholding. Mary had never seen the interior of a prison; and, to the surprise of her friends, she expressed a determination to visit the city jail. She allowed it was a strange wish, but she could not drive it from her thoughts. On the following day they accompanied her to the gloomy abode of iniquity and punishment, where crime, like a tiger, crouches ready to spring upon its victims as they enter, and complete within the walls of a prison the work of depravity it had already begun.

She shuddered as she beheld the keepers, with suspicion written on their eyeballs, slowly turn lock after lock, surveying the visiters with jealous scrutiny as they entered, and suddenly closing upon them one massy door after another, till they were enveloped in the innermost places of guilt. And there, the profane impenitence of fallen wretches, from the grey-haired criminal to the felon of ten years old, made humanity tremble and Christianity bleed. There, the elder corrupted the younger, laughed the lingering fragments of conscience to scorn, and developed the broad ways of vice. Some few mourned over their *first* crime, and trembled to think of the miserable futurity that awaited them, when the

days of their punishment would be past, and they should be again cast upon the world, the shunned of society.*

They were shewn into the cell of a miserable being lying under sentence of death for murder. He was seated on a low stool in the darkest corner of his dungeon, his elbows resting on his knees, and his face buried in his hands. His body rocked backward and forward convulsively, his fetters clanked with the melancholy motion, and his deep groans at times burst forth, in the bitterness of remorse, into an agonizing howl. He appeared alike insensible of their approach or their presence. They were about to depart, when he started up in a paroxysm of despair, and dashed his clenched hands against his forehead. His eyes, which were red with agony, fell upon Mary. He sprang back—he seized his chains and attempted to tear them from their fastenings; and, still riveting his eyes upon her features, he uttered a wild scream, and, as they were turning away in horror, exclaimed—

"Stay, Mary Nisbet—stay!" Her heart throbbed fast and painfully, as she heard her name thus suddenly and unexpectedly pronounced in such a place, and by such a being, and she clung closer to the arm of her friend: for there is something in the presence of a murderer from which the stoutest heart recoils, not with fear, but horror.

"Hear me!" he cried—"turn not away. Look upon me—know me! Art thou come to heap an orphan's curse upon the doomed of Heaven and of man? Hear me! my words are already steeped in the fury of despair—they burn my own throat! Look on me—*look on your father's murderer!*" As he said this, he again howled wildly, and struck his head against the wall.

"Miserable wretch!—*my father!*" exclaimed Mary. And, forgetful of her recent horror, she sprang forward and grasped him by the arm.

"Miserable indeed!—lost—ruined for ever!" screamed the wretched criminal. Mary trembled, wept, and fell back upon the shoulder of her friend.

"Ye have come to look on me as a wild beast," continued the murderer, vehemently; "ye have thrust your hand into its den, and it has not been withdrawn unwounded. But look on me again, and remember the features of a monster. Twelve years ago, Mary"——

Here the wretched man burst into tears, and wrung his hands upon his bosom. "Thank Heaven!" said her friend, "tears are the forerunners of repentance."

"Remorse! remorse!" ejaculated the hopeless criminal—"repentance is drowned in the blood of my victims." He paused a few moments, and again proceeded—"Twelve years ago I sat beneath your father's ministry. I resided in his parish. O death! I was then guiltless!—yes, yes—I was guiltless then! But what am I now?—a murderer!—the murderer of the very man who made me tremble at sin. Look on me, Mary—remember me now! In the midst of the hard winter, when labour was frozen up, and when I would have wrought if any man would have employed me, and when bread was buried in the granaries of the rich, you saved me from self-destruction—you saved my wife from death, my children from starvation!"

"Adam Black!" exclaimed Mary—"wretched man! can it be possible?"

"It is possible," continued he; "it is true. You saved me from destroying myself, and I have become the destroyer of others. You snatched my wife from death, and I have trampled on her bosom—I have hurled her to a strange grave, with a broken heart. You saved my children from starvation, and I have blasted them by my example, and they have become a pestilence to society—they have broken the law and endured its punishment. O woman! I have run the race of the wicked—I have worn all the honours of sin! I started as a poacher and a drunkard, and I have ended as a murderer. Want, and the fear of detection of crimes that I had committed, drove me from your father's parish. I came to this city—without a character, without principles, without friends, and with no aim but to live, though how I knew not. I became a prowling fiend upon the streets, a housebreaker and a robber, and an associate of those with whom I had become acquainted when we were convicts together. Some months ago, I saw your father in this city. My chief confederate in guilt learned that he had drawn a considerable sum of money, with which he was to return home on the following day. We resolved that the money should be ours, and agreed to rob him by the way. The better to avoid detection, we concerted that the robbery should take place in his own parish. We set out on the day before he was to leave, and arrived at the footpaths leading across the moor to the manse, after nightfall. My companion took his station upon one path, and I upon another, at about four hundred yards distant from each other, lest we should miss our prey. Within an hour, your father approached by the path on which I lay in wait for him. I sprang before him. I demanded his money. He refused it. He grappled with me—he was too powerful for me—he knew me—he mentioned my name. Till then I had not thought of murder; but I drew my knife—I plunged it in his bosom, and he fell dead at my feet. The booty we expected I did not find. My companion came up, and, with our hands we dug a grave for my victim in the morass. My fellow in guilt accused me of having secreted your father's money before he came to me. With deep oaths, I swore that I had found none; but he believed me not. Afterwards, he saw notices of the rewards that were offered for the apprehension of the murderer, or to those who could give information respecting your father's fate. We were drinking together, when he threatened to give me up to justice and receive the reward. Stung to insanity and despair by his threats, I sprang to my feet, and buried in his body the same knife I had plunged in your father's bosom. He expired before me; I was seized before I withdrew my hand; and now I am doomed to death—death here and hereafter. I would have carried this confession to the grave—if there be a grave for me. Your father's fate should have remained a mystery till suspicion darkened the soul of the innocent; but your appearance here dragged it to my lips—an invisible power compelled me to make it—and, now you have heard it, invoke the vengeance of Heaven upon me, and leave me."

Mary wept aloud for a few minutes, and, again addressing the criminal, said—"Unhappy man! waste not your numbered hours in wickedness and despair. Insult not the yet offered mercy of your Creator: for even for you, guilty as you are—and a more guilty man than you, Adam Black, breathes not upon the earth—yet even for you there is hope."

"Away, woman!" cried he impatiently; "am I a child, or am I an ignorant man, that ye preach to me! Did I not forsake my Maker in my youth, and dishonour Him with my strength, and will he accept my premature grey hairs? Shall He take me to heaven merely because I fear hell? Away, woman! ye have heard all I have to tell thee! I have lived a sinner, but I will not die the hangman's fool, believing that the steps of the gallows, like Jacob's ladder, lead to heaven!"

"Adam Black!" said Mary solemnly, and laying her hand upon his shoulder "dost thou believe the Scriptures?"

* It is a desideratum amongst the benevolent institutions of our country, that, for the class of unfortunate beings above referred to, there is no place of refuge. When the period of their punishment has expired, they are again driven upon the world, without character, without friends—the outcasts of society—despised, shunned, and unpitied—persecuted by the virtuous, and welcomed only by the vicious—willing to repent, but to them the path of repentance is barricaded—with no hope, and no means of subsistence but to return to their former crimes! There is surely enough of pity and of Christian charity in the bosoms of the British public to attempt the rescue of such. It is a fearful thing to behold thousands of our fellow-beings, who would willingly return to the arms of honesty, driven again by *necessity* back upon guilt. It should be enough to say unto philanthropy, "Look upon these," that the work of their redemption might be begun. The amelioration of their condition, however, would require a remedy separate from an amendment of our prison discipline, or an enactment of the legislature.

"Yes!" exclaimed he, "I believe as devils believe—I believe and tremble; and already I feel the futurity that awaits me, in the absence of hope—in the gnawing of the worm that dieth not—in the burning of despair!"

"Wretched being!" said she, "add not wilful despair to the catalogue of your crimes."

"Woman, woman!" he cried, furiously—"why are ye come to torment me before my time! My conscience cried to me for years—'Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?' but I laughed at its voice, I drowned it in the yell of human fiends, and now it has turned upon my bosom, where it clings and stings as a scorpion! Away, woman! away! Torture me not—leave me!—leave me!"

She was supported from the prison in the arms of her friends; and, on the following day, Adam Black, her father's murderer, expiated his crimes upon a scaffold.

I CANNA BE FASHED!

OR,

WILLIE GRANT'S CONFESSIONS.

HERE'S a bonny day, sir," said old Willie Grant, "and the Whitadder's in excellent trim—will ye get your gad and your creel, and we'll awa see what sort o' sport there is. If I'm no mista'en the trouts will rise as fast as ye throw the line to-day."

"Oh, I canna be fashed," said the individual to whom he spoke.

"What's that I hear ye say?" added Willie, seriously—'Ye canna be fashed! can ye no! Do ye think ye could be fashed to read the 'Cottagers o' Glenburnie?' Ye would there see the meaning and the effects o' 'I canna be fashed,' illustrated. But if ye can be fashed to hear, I'll gie ye an example in my ain case; and, I assure ye, that those four words, 'I—canna—be—fashed'—(he spoke them very slowly, laying emphasis on each)—I say, sir, those four words hae cost me a thousand pounds twice told. I got them for naething; but, certes, they proved a dear bargain in the lang run. They hae made me acquainted wi' a sair skin, a sair heart, and an empty pocket. I hae nae remembrance wha learned me the words, nor am I altogether certain but that they are words that just spring out o' the laziness and indolence o' our dispositions, like weeds out o' a neglected soil. But weel do I remember the first time when I was made to hae a feeling remembrance o' having used them. My faither was a bit sma' laird in East Lothian—no very far frae Dunglass—and the property consisted o' between thirty and forty acres, so that he managed to bring up a family o' five o' us very comfortably, and rather respectably—and the more especially as my mother was a very thrifty woman. I was the third o' the family; and, as I was gaun to say to ye, there was ae day that we were a' gilravishing about the floor, and wheeling ane anither in a little wheelbarrow that my faither had got a cartwright in Dunbar to mak for us—(for he was a man that liked to see his bairns happy)—when, says he to me—

"Willie, tie yer whings,* and dinna let yer shoon be shaughlin aff yer feet in that gaet, or ye maun gang barefoot. Folk shouldna hae shoon that dinna ken hoo to wear them."

"I canna be fashed, faither," said I, and continued running after the wheelbarrow; but, before ever I wist, and before I thought that I had done ill, he gied me a cuff i' the haffits, that made me birl half donner't by the cheek o' the lum.†

"Ay, man!" says he, "what's that I hear ye say—'*ye canna be fashed!*' Let me hear the words come out o' your lips again if ye daur, and I'll knock the life out o' ye.'

That was the first time that I particularly remember o' having made use o' the phrase, and I am only sorry that the clout which my faither gied me, didna drive it out o' my head frae that day henceforth, and for ever; though, truly, it had nae such effect, as ye shall hear, and as I experienced to my sorrow. I sat down whinging till my faither gaed out o' the house, and, as soon as his back was turned, I dried my een, and began to drive about the barrow again wi' my brothers and sisters; but I hadna run aboon ten minutes, till my mother, wha was tired wi' the noise we were making, cried—

"Willie, laddie, gie me off your stockings instantly—preserve us! the callant has holes in their heels ye might put yer nieve through!—there's what ye've dune wi' your running about without yer whings tied."

"Hoot, mother," cried I, "I canna be fashed—darn them again' nicht."

"I'll '*canna be fashed*' ye—ye lazy monkey, ye. Did your faither no gie ye enough for that no ten minutes syne, and ye'll tell me ony siccan a story!"

She grippit me by the neck, and, for my faither's ae clout, she gied me ten, at every cuff saying—"I'll *canna be fashed* ye!" And, at last, she threw off my shoon, and pulled the stockings off my legs, and pushed me away frae her wi' a great drive, crying—"Now, only let me hear ye making use o' thae words again, and ye'll maybe see what I can be fashed to do."

"Oh, dear me!" thought I, "what ill have I done?" And I sat down and I grat, and I roared most heartily, and I kicked my bare feet upon the floor.

"Kick away there, my man," said my mother—for she was a woman that never got into what ye could call a passion in her family, as I have seen some mothers do—"kick away there," says she; "and if ye drive a hole in the heels o' the stockings you've on now, ye'll darn them yoursel."

But this, sir, was only the first thrashing that I got for "I canna be fashed"—it wasna the last, by a score o' times. My faither was a man that never liked to lay out a shilling where it could be saved; and he always grudged to employ other people to do anything when he thought it could be done within his own house—that is, by the members o' his own family—therefore, about the back end o' spring, or the fore end o' summer, he would have said to us—

"Now, bairns, had awa to your beds, and before schooltime the morn, gang and howe the potatoes, or weed the corn." I never durst say onything then, but slipped away to bed very unwillingly—just feeling as if I felt it a trouble to put off my claes. But before sunrise in the morning, when my brothers would have wakened me, I used to rub my een, and gaunt, and say—

"What!—what!—hoots!—I canna be fashed!"

And my faither, frae the ben-a-house, would have cried out, wi' a voice that made the very nails on my fingers shake—"What's that he's saying?—I'll *be fashed* him!"

Then up I would have got, shrugging my shouthers, and wriggling them frae side to side, and cried peevishly to one—"Where's my stockings?"—and to another, "Where's my jacket?"

Then my faither would have cried out again—"*I'll seek* it for ye!" Then I soon found it, and got out o' the house wi' the rest o' them.

It was precisely the same thing when my brothers used to shake me in a morning, and say—

"Get up, Willie—ye haena your task yet."

I had invariably the same answer for them on such occasions also. I appeared as if naething could drive it out o' me. I have heard auld wives say, if ye were taking infants to ony part o' the globe ye like, and keeping them where they

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* Shoe-ties. † Chimney

never would hear a human voice, nor speech o one kind nor another, that they would speak Hebrew! Now, I verily believe, that, if ye had done the same by me—if ye had taken me, when a week auld, into the deserts o Arawbia, wi' naething but dummies round about me, and not a living soul nor a living thing endowed wi' the power o' speech allowed to see me or come near me—I say, that I verily believe the first words I would have spoken, would have been—"*I canna be fashed!*" in guid braid Scotch. The words literally seemed born wi' me. And, as I was telling ye about getting up to learn my tasks in a morning, many, many is the time, in the cauldest day o' winter, that my favourite phrase has caused the tawse to warm my hands, when the fingers o' a' the rest o' the scholars were dinnlin wi' cauld, and they were holding them at their mouths, and blowing their hot breath on them to take out the frost. My faither should have paid no coal-money for me. And more than this, the four insignificant and carelessly-uttered words which I allude to, while I was at school, always kept me near the bottom o' the class or, if I rose one or two towards the top, it was purely on account o' others having been away from the school for a day, or half a day, and having to take the foot o' the class on account o' their absence, as a matter o' course. Often and often I could have trapped their heels, and taken my place aboon them—and the teacher kenned it as weel, and many a weary time has he said to me—"Oh, ye stupid stirk! why do ye stand there?—why didna ye trap him?"

And once in particular, I remember, I answered him—"I couldna be fashed, sir!"

"Fashed!" he cried, in a perfect fury, and he raised the tawse to his teeth—"fashed, sirrah!" he cried again—"then I'll learn ye to be fashed!"

But o' a' the belabourings I ever got frae either faither or mother, for the same cause, they were naething to the schoolmaster's. It's a miracle to me that there was a tail left on his tawse; for he loundered me round the school and round the school; and, aye as he loundered, he girned his teeth together, and he cried—"Heard ever onybody the like o' that! Canna be fashed, truly!—I'll fash ye, my man!—I'll learn ye to gie me an answer o' that kind again!"

But a' the thrashings that faither, and mother, and master could thrash at me, on every occasion, the confounded words were aye uppermost—they were perpetually at my tongue end. I was just an easy, indolent being—one that seemed disposed to steal through the world wi' my hands in pocket, as smoothly as possible. When I grew to be a lad, I daresay those that kenned me best were surprised that I could be fashed to gang a-courting, like other youngsters. But even then, when others would brush themselves up, and put on their half-best coat, and the like o' that, in order that they might look as smart as possible, I have thought to myself, I wonder if I should shave and wash my face, and gie mysel a redd-up before I gang to see *her* the night; but perpetually I used to say to mysel—"Ou, I daresay I canna be fashed—I'll do very weel as I am." And there wasna less than three or four young lasses that I had a particular liking for—and each o' them, I daresay, would made an excellent wife, and I could been very happy wi' ony o' them—but they all broke off acquaintance wi' me, "just," as they said to their friends, "because I was o' such a slovenly disposition, that I couldna even be fashed to mak mysel purpose-like when I gaed to see a body."

The like o' this was very galling to me; but it hadna the effect o' making a better o' me. I couldna be fashed to be ony better, let come what might. "Losh-a-day," thought I, "I wonder what folk would hae me to be at, or how they can gie themsels sae meikle trouble, and be sae particular!"

But, beyond all others, there was one young woman that I had an affection for in a very extraordinary degree. She was as dear to me as the apple o' my ee; and I am sure she could hae done onything wi' me—save to break me o' my habit o' saying—"I canna be fashed." That was beyond her power. It was my fixed intention to marry her; and, indeed, not only was the wedding-day set, but her wedding-gown and my coat were made, and the ring was bought, and she had spoken to her bride's maid; and, besides buying a sort o' things hersel, she had got her mother to have her providing packed up, and everything was in readiness just to be lifted to our new house—that is, the house we were to occupy. Now, when all this had taken place, there was one bonny starlight night that we were walking together, just as happy as twa wood-pigeons, and talking owre the settlement o' everything, that she said to me—

"What did the joiner say last night, Willie?—will he be sure no to disappoint us wi' the furniture?—for I would like everything right at the very first."

Eh! weel-minded, my dear," says I; "I really forgot to gang and see him, for I was sae tired when I got hame last night, that—I couldna be fashed."

"That was silly o' ye, man," said she; "it was very thoughtless. But I hope ye didna forget to gie in the marriage lines to the minister?" (The session-clerk was ill at the time.)

"Save us a', hinny!" said I, "weel, I am sure that dings everything! But, as sure as death! as I told ye, I was sae tired, that I never minded a word about it till bed-time, when I had my waistcoat unbuttoned and my shoon off, and I couldna be fashed to put them on again, and, at ony rate, it was owre late."

"Very weel, Willie," says she, and apparently a good deal hurt, "I wouldna thought it o' ye—but no matter."

"No, love," said I, "it's no great matter, sure enough; for this is only Saturday night, and I'll just call in at the manse in the by-going, as I gang hame, and tell the minister a about it. The thing can be done in a minute."

"Indeed, no," said she, "though I should never be cried,* ye are to go no such way. This is Saturday night—the morn is the Sabbath, and the minister will be at his studies, and ye are not to disturb him upon my account."

"Very well, love," said I, "we'll just have to put off a week, then."

"Maybe sae," said she. But I thought there was something unco dry in her manner o' saying "maybe sae." However, as I couldna be fashed to call upon the minister that night, I took nae mair notice o' the subject.

I could hardly get a word out o' her after this, for above an hour that I remained in her company. However, she rather came to a little, (for she was a kind-hearted lassie,) when we were about to part; and we promised faithfully to meet one another at the usual trysting-place, on the Wednesday night following, at eight o'clock, within a minute; and I was to have everything arranged wi' the minister and the joiner in the meantime.

On the Sunday morning, the minister passed me between the manse and the kirk, and says he, quite familiarly—for he was a man that had nae stiffness about him—

"Willie, I thought you was to have been cried to-day."

"I beg your pardon, sir," said I; "but it was all my neglect; for I couldna be fashed until last night, and then I thought ye would be at your studies, and it was owre late to trouble ye."

"You were very considerate," said he, wi' a smile; "but I'll save you the trouble next week."

"I'll be obliged to ye, sir," said I, taking off my hat.

In going home, I overtook the joiner—no, I'm wrong, the joiner overtook me—and, after he had observed that it was a fine day, and I had said it was, and he had asked me what I thought o' the sermon, and so on, I said to him—"Now, I expect that ye'll no disappoint me wi' the furniture."

* *Cried*—Publication of banns.

"Ye needna be feared o' that, Mr Grant," said he; "ye ken ye proposed that it was to be a ready-money transaction. It's no every day that we meet wi' jobs o' that kind, and ye may tak my word on't, I'll no disappoint ye—both for your sake and mine."

"Weel," thought I, "that's twa things off my head—Isabella will surely be pleased now, (for they ca'd her Isabella.) I've been fortunate in meetin' wi' them baith—in killin' twa birds wi' ae stane."

But the appointed Wednesday night came, and perfectly do I recollect, that a dark, dirty, gousty night it was. I had full three miles to go to see her, and about seven o'clock I pulled out my watch, and I went to the door. A sma', drizzling rain came battering on my face. I looked a' round about the heavens, and saw that there was nae appearance o' the night's clearing up, and, thinks I—"Weel, she'll ne'er think o' coming to meet me the night. She'll no be sae daft. It's o' nae use o' me gaun, and—I canna be fashed."

So I went into the house again, and sat down quite contented; and a night or twa after, the weather having settled, I went to see her at her faither's. The auld folk received me, as usual, very kindly; and the auld man got a seat for me next the fire, and inquired if there were any news—while his guidwife asked me if I wadna hae my stockings changed, as the roads were very wet, and my feet might be damp—and I thanked her, and said "No." But there sat *my intended*, plaiting at a cap-border, or frill, or something o' that sort, as stiff and as silent as a stucco image, never letting on that she either saw or heard me. I spoke to her twice or thrice, and she gied a sort o' low, half cough, half *hem!* but not a syllable did I get out o' her. Never did she look to the side o' the house I was on. Her head seemed to be fixed in a blacksmith's vice in an opposite direction, and dear kens what sort o' cap or frill it was she keepit plait, plait, plaiting at; but her task was never like to come to an end, and she keepit pingle, pingling, and nip, nipping at it wi' a knife, until my patience was fairly worn out. In my opinion her fingers had discovered the perpetual motion; and when I had sat until vexation and anxiety were like to choke me, and I felt a sort o' ha!—ha!—haing! in my throat; as though I could hae burst out into a fit o' passion, or greeting, or I dinna ken what—and wi' a great struggle I got up, and I managed to say—

"Will ye speak at the door, Isabella, dear."

"*I canna be fashed!*" said she.

O sir! sir! had ye experienced what I felt at that moment. The lounderings o' my faither, my mother, and my dominie, and the slights o' former sweethearts, were a mere naething to what her answer caused me to endure. I expected naething but that I would drop down upon the floor.

"Oh, ye foolish lassie, ye!" said her mother, who was sorry for me, "what do ye mean?"

"Get up!" said her faither.

"I canna be fashed!" said she again, more cuttingly than before, and half turned her een upon me, as she said it, in a manner that gaed through my breast as if ye had drawn a sharp knife across it.

Weel, sir, our names were ca'ed on the Sunday following, and between the first day o' their being published, and the day on which the marriage was to take place, I was three or four times back and forward at her faither's—but I got nae mair out o' her. I almost thought that I ought to stop the banns; but I thought, again, that that would be very unco like, and very contrary to what I wished; so I allowed them to go on, Sunday after Sunday.

I never imagined but that she was just in the pet at me having broken my tryst, and that, like everybody that was in the pet, she would come out o't when she found it necessary, and the sooner frae being left to hersel. But, on the very day we had fixed for the wedding, and when the best-man and I went to her faither's house, expecting to find her and the best-maid, and the whole o them in readiness to go before the minister—to my unutterable astonishment and dismay, there was she, sitting in her morning gown, as unconcerned as a judge, just as if naething had been to happen.

"Mercy me! Isabella!" says I, "are ye no ready?—where's the women?"

"Ready!" returned she—"what for?—what do ye mean?—what women?"

Oh! guid gracious! I'll never forget the sensation that I felt at that moment. I'm surprised that I didna drop dead on the floor. "Isabella," said I, "are ye no perfectly aware that this is our wedding-day, and that we were to be at the manse at twelve o'clock precisely?"

"Ay!" said she, "had ye keepit your tryst at such a time, and at such a place, nae doubt this would have been the day, but ye couldna be fashed to keep it then—and I canna be fashed now."

"Oh, confound it!' cried I, "Isabella, do ye want to drive me mad?"

"I dinna think there's ony danger o' that," replied she.

Vexation and surprise put me fairly beyont myself—I was taken in a moment.

"Weel!" exclaimed I, "ye'll rue it, Isabella! ye'll rue it—there shall nae woman mak a fool o' me!"

"Nor man o' me," said she.

"Be it sae," said I; "yet, guidness me! you're no in earnest?"

"Earnest!" said she, "I tell you I canna be fashed."

At the sound o' the terrible words, I banged out o' the house. I never stopped till I came to Dunbar, and there, at the very moment I arrived, I took the coach for Edinburgh: and there I stopped but two days till I set off for London, for my heart was in such a terrible state o' perturbation, that I could have gone to the world's end, ay, and round it, and round it again, if I had had the means, in order that I might have found rest.

It seems that poor Isabella thought that I would come back—and the best-man persuaded her that I would—and she went to dress hersel, and sent for the best-maid. But little did she understand the character she had to deal wi'. I was either a' laziness, or a' desperation. I knew no medium; and I have no doubt, that, before she got her hair dressed, and her gown fairly on, I was half-way to Edinburgh—for I flew to Dunbar as though furies had pursued me.

But, sir, the upshot was, that Isabella died a spinster, and I am a bachelor until this day, and will be, until the last day o' my existence; and thus did the four never-enough-to-be-detested words—"I canna be fashed," place eternity, yea, an infinite chasm, between me and the only woman for whose sake I could have laid down my life, as cheaply as though it hadna been worth a sixpence.

Ye may think that the few instances I have related to ye and their consequences, would have been enough to have cured me o' ever making use o' the words again—but ye shall see.

Now, you'll observe, that, before the time I'm speaking o', my faither and mother were both dead, as well as two o' their family, so that there were but three o' us left, and we sold the property, and divided the money amongst us in equal shares. Therefore, when I got to London, I was not altogether bare-handed. Now, to my shame, I must confess that I had not been long there, till the remembrance of Isabella, and the cause that had provoked me to come to desert her, were almost forgotten; for ye must remember, that absence makes many changes—and there is many a bonny face in London. So, after I had looked about me for a week or two, I thought to myself, that I saw nobody doing better than the keepers o' wine and spirit vaults. It seemed a' ready money—it was just nipper after nipper—that is, glass after glass, owre the counter—the money down, and done wi' it. I resolved to become a wine-vault keeper, and I

looked around to see where such premises were to let. At length I pitched upon a shop that I thought would suit me exactly, on the north side of Clerkenwell Street, and nearly facing Jerusalem passage.

There were a very great number o' compositors and pressmen, and bookbinders and gold-beaters, and other trades, in the immediate neighbourhood; and I understood that they were in the habit o' making the vaults which I was about to take, their pay-house and house-o'-call. So I took the house, and entered upon the business, and, in a very short time, I thought very little about Isabella, or the grief she had caused me. I hadna long opened the house until the compositors and the pressmen, the bookbinders, gold-beaters, and others, a' came back to it. They were weel-spoken, civil lads. They spent a deal o' money, and I certainly tried to be as civil and obliging to them as I could; and, in short, they called me "a fine chap," and "the best Scotsman out of all *sorts* they had ever met with."

Weel, in a week or two, some o them began to get on to my slates—not by name—for I didna like to ask it; it was impudent; and, thought I, oh, it might spoil their custom at ony rate—and I canna be fashed—it would be an awfu' trouble writing names upon a slate, especially the names o' so many. But I knew them a' by head-mark, and I thought there was no need for it.

However, one got into my books, and another got into my books; but, no, I am wrong there again, for they only got onto the slates—I couldna be fashed to carry them into the books; I thought there was nae need for it; they generally paid upon the Saturday night, and there was nae fear o' me forgettin'.

But, in a short time, there never was a Saturday night but there was always some of my debtor customers amissing; and when I inquired for any o' them, the reply was—

"Oh, you're one of his ghosts, are you? well, I wish you may get it—he's *got the bag*." *

"So, so," I would say, "and he is off with his finger in my bag too."

Well, in this way I lost more money than I can tell. But I lost it in another way also, and from the same cause. You know that in London every public-house has a porter-walk, or a beer-walk, as they call it, the same as the rounds of a milk-woman here, and they go round twice a-day, at dinner-time and supper-time. Well, to my surprise, in a few months I got the best beer-walk in all London. I couldna think how it was. I was almost rivalling the Alderney dairy which was at my very hand, for I had to engage two pot-boys to carry out my supply. But I gave credit; I trusted to the lads to keep an account of what they took out, and they trusted to me. I said, "I couldna be fashed wi' the like o' that;" but they said they gave me the names and number o' the individuals with whom they had intrusted both porter and pewter pots; and if I did not mark it down and see after it, it was my look out and not theirs. In this way, I believe, I lost five butts of porter within twelve months. Yet, sir, these were not the only griefs and the only losses that the four words which are the subject of my story, have brought upon me. Not only did I frequently neglect to insert in my own books what I had sent out on credit, but I as frequently delayed to mark down what had been sent to me by the brewer or distiller, and said, "Hoot, I haena time—I canna be fashed to enter it to-day, I will do it the morn, or the next day." But the next day and the next came, and I could be less fashed than ever, and the entry remained untouched. Many a heavy loss I am sensible this has caused me; and often has it made me appear as a rogue when my intentions were honest.

Sir, what I have told ye is but a sample o' what "*I canna be fashed*" has cost me. I could relate to you a thousand o' its consequences; but half a dozen are as good, and, perhaps, better than a thousand, by way o example.

I had been about fifteen years in business, when I became bond for a friend that I thought I could have trusted as my own brother, to the extent o' three thousand pounds. I was certain he was perfectly solvent, and from the acquaintance I had had o' him, I could nae mair hae doubted him than I could hae doubted that I was the son o' my mother. But a few weeks after I had signed the bond, a mutual acquaintance called upon me, and, says he—

"Grant, you have acted like a fool."

"I dinna doubt," says I, for I was perfectly aware that I often had; "but what do ye mean to be at?"

"Why," says he, "So-and-so has taken you in. He is preparing to be off, bag and baggage, for America, and you will be left to pay the piper."

"Oh, ye are a suspicious wretch," says I; "man, I couldna believe the like o' that if ye were to swear it to me."

"Believe it or not," says he, "if you don't see after it instantly, your three thousand pounds are gone."

"Hoot! babbles!" said I, "the man's daft!—do ye think I dinna ken him better than that? The man is as sure as the bank. I would be the last man he would injure a farthing—I ken that weel enough. But, at ony rate, I am particularly busy, and I canna be fashed wi' ony nonsense o' the kind; so ye may keep yoursel easy, and I am only sorry that ye should hae such an opinion o' ony friend o' mine."

"Canna be fashed!" cried my acquaintance, hurrying from the shop; "what a deuced fool! Grant, you'll repent it."

I laughed at the man, for I had perfect confidence in my friend, and I knew that he had property worth three times the money that I was bond for him.

On the very next day, the same acquaintance came into my house very hastily, and, says he—

"Grant, if you don't look after your money, and that very sharply, you will find your friend's property is no go, and you are in for paying your three thousand."

"Ye dinna mean to say the like o' that," said I.

"Say that, you blockhead!" returned my acquaintance—"wherefore wouldn't you believe me yesterday?" And placing his arm through mine, he dragged me out of the house. We reached the habitation of the worthy gentleman for whom I was surety in the sum of three thousand precious pounds sterling. But he was off—off like a bird whose nest has been robbed of its eggs. Twelve hours before, he had sailed for America, or some other quarter of the globe; but where I never knew.

"Come home, Grant," said my friend, "don't distress yourself now."

"Oh, dinna speak to me," says I—"I canna be fashed; my three thousand pounds!—my poor three thousand pounds!"

We went into a tavern, and I drank out o' pure desperation until I could hardly stand; and as we were going home I fell, and I dislocated my arm, or I broke it; at ony rate, I did something to it, and it never was like to get better; and my friends advised me to send for a surgeon—but——

"What to do wi' a surgeon?" says I—"I canna be fashed wi' them. The arm will get better itsel'."

But, from that day until the present hour, I have never had the right use o' it. It made me useless, in a great measure, in the way o' business. Therefore, I sold the good-will o my house, and wi' the other little remains o' what I had saved, I came down here, just to live as easy and as cheap as possible. And now, sir, as ye have seen what a *great gainer* I have been by the words "*I canna be fashed*," I hope and implore ye will never use them again, but take a warning by the example o' Willie Grant.

* *Got the bag*—i. e. paid off, or discharged.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE ROYAL BRIDAL;

OR,

THE KING MAY COME IN THE CADGER'S WAY.

EARLY in July, in the year of grace 1503, Lamberton Moor presented a proud and right noble spectacle. Upon it was outspread a city of pavilions, some of them covered with cloth of the gorgeous purple and glowing crimson, and decorated with ornaments of gold and silver. To and fro, upon brave steeds, richly caparisoned, rode a hundred lords and their followers, with many a score of gay and gallant knights and their attendant gentlemen. Fair ladies, too, the loveliest and the noblest in the land, were there. The sounds of music from many instruments rolled over the heath. The lance gleamed, and the claymore flashed, and war-steeds neighed, as the notes of the bugle rang loud for the tournament. It seemed as if the genius of chivalry had fixed its court upon the heath.

It may be meet, however, that we say a word or two concerning Lamberton, for though, now-a-days, it may lack the notoriety of Gretna in the annals of matrimony, and though its "*run of business*" may be of a humbler character, there was a time when it could boast of prouder visiters than ever graced the Gretna blacksmith's temple. To the reader, therefore, who is unacquainted with our eastern Borders, it may be necessary to say, that, at the northern boundary of the lands appertaining to the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and about three miles, a furlong, and few odd yards from that oft-recorded good town, a dry stone-wall, some thirty inches in height, runs from the lofty and perpendicular sea-banks over a portion of what may be termed the fag-end of Lammermoor, and now forming a separation between the laws of Scotland and the jurisdiction of the said good town; and on crossing to the northern side of this humble but important stone-wall, you stand on the lands of Lamberton. Rather more than a stone-throw from the sea, the great north road between London and Edinburgh forms a gap in the wall aforesaid, or rather "dyke;" and there, on either side of the road, stands a low house, in which Hymen's high priests are ever ready to make one flesh of their worshippers. About a quarter of a mile north of these, may still be traced something of the ruins of the kirk, where the princess of England became the bride of the Scottish king, and the first link of the golden chain of UNION, which eventually clasped the two nations in one, may be said to have been formed.

The gay and gallant company were assembled on Lamberton, for within the walls of its kirk, the young, ardent, and chivalrous James IV. of Scotland was to receive the hand of his fair bride, Margaret of England, whom Dunbar describes as a

> "Fresche rose, of cullor reid and white."

The wild heath presented all the splendour of a court, and the amusements of a crowded city. Upon it were thousands of spectators, who had come to witness the royal exhibitions and the first durable bond of amity between two rival nations. Some crowded to behold the tourneyings of the knights with sword, spear, and battle-axe; others to witness the representation of plays, written "expressly for the occasion;" while a third party were delighted with the grotesque figures and positions of the morris-dancers; and a fourth joined in, or were spectators of, the humbler athletic exercises of wrestling, leaping, putting the stone, and throwing the hammer.

All, too, were anxious to see the young king, whose courage and generosity were the theme of minstrels, and of whom one sayeth—

> "And ye Christian princes, whosoever ye be,
> If ye be destitute of a noble captayne,
> Take James of Scotland for his audacitie
> And proved manhood, if ye will laud attayne."

But the young monarch was as remarkable for his gallantry and eccentricity, as for his generosity and courage; and no one seemed able to tell whether or not he lodged in the magnificent pavilion over which the royal standard of Scotland waved, or whether he intended to welcome his royal bride by proxy.

But our story requires that, for a time, we leave princes, knights, and tournaments, and notice humbler personages and more homely amusements. At a distance from the pavilion, the tourneyings, the music, the plays, and other exhibitions, was a crowd composed of some seven or eight hundred peasantry engaged in and witnessing the athletic games of the Borders. Near these were a number of humbler booths, in which the spectators and competitors might regale themselves with the spirits and tippenny then in use.

Amongst the competitors was one called Meikle Robin, or Robin Meikle. He was strength personified. His stature exceeded six feet; his shoulders were broad, his chest round, his limbs well and strongly put together. He was a man of prodigious bone and sinews. At throwing the hammer, at putting the stone, no man could stand before him. He distanced all who came against him; and, while he did so, he seemed to put forth not half his strength, while his skill appeared equal to the power of his arm.

Now, amongst the spectators of the sports, there stood one who was known for many miles around by the appellation of *Strong Andrew*. He was not so tall, by three inches, as the conqueror of the day; nor could he measure with him either across the shoulders or around the chest; and, in fact, he was rather a thin man than otherwise, nor did he appear a powerful one—but his bones were well set. His sinews were all strength—they were not incumbered with flesh. He was as much a model of activity and suppleness, as Meikle Robin was of bodily power. Now, Andrew was a native of Eyemouth; he was about three and thirty years of age, and he united in his person the callings of a fisherman and cadger; or, in other words, Andrew, being without mother sister, wife, or servant, sold himself the fish which he had

caught. His domestic establishment consisted of a very large and a very wise water-dog, and a small pony; and with the last-mentioned animal he carried his fish around the country. For several days, and on the day in question, he had brought his store for sale to the camps or pavilions at Lamberton, where he had found a ready and an excellent market. Now, as Andrew stood and witnessed the championship of Meikle Robin, his blood boiled within him; and "Oh," thought he, "but if I had onybody that I could trust to tak care o' the Galloway and my jacket, *and the siller*, but I wad tak the conceit out o' ye, big as ye are."

Andrew possessed his country's courage and its caution in equal proportions; and, like a wise man, he did not choose to trust his money by risking it to strangers. In such a motley company it would not be safe to do so now a-days; but it would have been much less so then. For, at that time, and especially on the Borders, the law of *mine* and *thine* was most imperfectly understood. But Andrew's determination to humble the champion was well-nigh overcoming his caution, when the former again stepped into the ring, and cast off his jacket for a wrestling bout. He stood looking round him for a minute; and it was evident that every one was afraid to enter the lists against him. Andrew could endure it no longer; and he was saying—"Will ony person tak charge o' my Galloway?"——

When a young man of middle stature, and whose dress bespoke him to be a domestic of one of the noblemen who had come to witness the royal festival, and grace it with their presence, entered the lists. Without even throwing off his bonnet, he stretched out his arms to encounter the champion, who met him—somewhat after the fashion that Goliath met David—with contempt. But the first grasp of the stranger, as he seized his arms above the elbows, instead of throwing them round his waist, (as was, and is the unscientific practice of the Borders,) informed Robin that he had no common customer to deal with. Robin, as a wrestler, in a great measure trusted to mere strength and tripping. He knew nothing of turning an antagonist from his centre of gravity by a well-timed and well-directed touch. He therefore threw his arms around the back of his opponent, (so far as the grasp which the other had got of them would permit,) with the intention of giving him a "Hawick hug," but he found he could not join his hands together so as to effect his purpose, and his strength could not accomplish it. Ignorant of his antagonist's mode of attack, he had allowed him an advantage over him; and when he endeavoured to gain it by tripping his heels, the other suddenly changed his feet, favoured Robin with a "Devonian kick," and suddenly dashing his bended knee against his person, Robin lost his footing, and fell upon his back with the stranger above him.

The spectators shouted; and Andrew, mounting his pony, exclaimed aloud—

"Weel dune, stranger—I'm as glad as though I had gotten a gowden coin."

Now, it is but justice to Andrew to say, that he had repeatedly defeated Meikle Robin, both at wrestling, cudgel-playing, and every athletic exercise; but I shall give the reader an account of his having done so upon one occasion, in his own words, as it is necessary for the forwarding of our narrative.

Andrew went to Lamberton with his fish on the following day, and again he found a profitable market; and some words had again passed between him and Meikle Robin; but, as he was returning home, he overtook the stranger by whom Robin had been defeated.

"Losh, man!" said Andrew, pulling up his pony, "is this ye? I canna tell ye hoo glad I am to see ye, for I've dune naething but thocht o' ye ever since yesterday, when I saw ye tak the brag out o' Meikle Robin, just as easily as I would bend a willy-wand. Now, I hope, sir, although ye are a stranger, ye no think ill o' my familiarity?"

"Think ill, comrade," said the other, "why should I do so?"

"Why, I watna," said Andrew, "but there seems to be sae mony kind o' butterflies getting about the court now, wi their frills and their gold-laced jackets, from what I can judge o' their appearance for some days past on the Moor, that I wasna sure but it might be like-master like-man wi ye, and I was uncertain how to speak to ye. I didna ken but that, in some things, ye might imitate your superiors, and treat a cadger body as though they hadna been o' the same flesh and blood wi' yoursel."

The stranger laughed, and repeated the adage—

"Why—the king may come in the cadger's way."

"Very true, sir," said Andrew, "and may find him a man mair like himsel than he imagines. But, sir, what I was gaun to say to you—and it is connected wi' your defeating o' Meikle Robin yesterday. (At least I wish to make it connected wi' it.) Weel, just five days syne, I was at Lamberton—it was the very day after the royal party arrived—and Robin was there. Perhaps you was there yoursel; but the tents were there, and the games, and the shows and everything were going on, just the same as ye saw them yesterday. But, as I was telling ye, Meikle Robin was there Now, he gets the brag o' being the best cudgel-player, putter, and wrestler, in a' Berwickshire—and, between you and I, that is a character that I dinna like to hear gaun past mysel. However, as I was saying, on the day after the royal party had come to the Moor, and the games were begun. he had the ball fairly at his foot, and fient a' ane durst tak him up ava. He was terribly insulting in the pride o' his victoriousness, and, in order to humble him, some were running frae tent to tent to look for Strong Andrew—(that is me ye observe; for they ca' me that as a sort o' nickname—though for what reason I know not.) At last they got me. I had had a quegh or twa, and I was gay weel on—(for I never, in my born days, had had such a market for my fish; indeed, I got whatever I asked, and I was wishing, in my heart, that the king's marriage party would stop on Lammerton Moor for a twelvemonth)—but, though I had a drappie owre the score, Robin was as sober as a judge; for, plague tak him! he kenned what he was doing—he was owre cunnin' to drink, and laid himsel out for a quarrel. It was his aim to carry the 'gree' owre a' upon the Moor at every thing, that the king, who is said to be as fond o' thae sort o' sports as onybody, might tak notice o' him, and do something for him. There was a cowardliness in the very idea o' such conduct—it shewed a fox's heart in the carcase o' a bullock. Weel, those that were seeking me got me, and clean off hand I awa to the tent where he was making a his great braggadocio, and, says I to him, 'Robin,' says I, 'I'm your man at onything ye like, and for whatever ye like. I'll run ye—or, I'll jump ye—I'll putt the stone wi' ye—or, *I'll fight ye*—and, if ye like it better, I'll wrestle ye—or try ye at the cudgels—and dinna be cutting your capers there owre a wheen callants.' Weel, up he got, and a ring was made aback o' the tent. He had an oak stick as thick as your wrist, and I had naething but the bit half switch that I hae in my hand the now, for driving up the Galloway. Mine was a mere bog-reed to his, independent o' its being fully six inches shorter—and, if ye ken onything about cudgelling, that was a material point. 'Od, sir, I found I couldna cope wi' him. My stick, or rather switch, was nae better than half a dozen o' rashes plaited together. 'Will ony o' ye lend me a stick, gentlemen?' cried I to the by-standers, while I keepit guarding him off the best way I could. Aboon a dozen were offered in an instant. I gript at the nearest. Now, 'Heaven hae mercy on ye!' said I, and gied him a whissel beneath the elbow, and, before ye could say Jock Robison! cam' clink across

his knee. I declare to ye, sir, he cam' spinning down like a totum. He talked nae mair o' wrestling, or cudgelling, or onything else that day. I settled him for four and twenty hours at ony rate. Weel, sir, I was perfectly delighted when I saw you lay him on the broad o' his back yesterday; and I saw nae mair o' him, to speak to, frae the day that I humbled him, until about four hours syne, when I met in wi' him on the Moor, amang three or four o' his cronies, at his auld trade o' boasting again. I had nae patience with him. But he had a drop owre meikle, and, at ony rate, I thought there could be nae honour in beating the same man twice. But, says I to him, 'Ye needna craw sae loud, for, independent o' me bringing ye to the ground at cudgelling, and makin' ye no worth a doit, I saw a youngster that wrestled wi' ye yesterday, twist ye like a barley-strae.' And, to do him justice, sir, he didna attempt to deny it, but said that ye wud do the same by me, if I would try ye, and offered to back ye against ony man in the twa kingdoms. Now, sir, I looked about all the day in the crowd, just to see if I could clap my een on ye, and to ask ye, in a friendly way, if ye would let me try what sort o' stuff ye are made o', but I couldna fall in wi' ye; and now I'm really glad that I hae met wi' ye—and as this is a gay level place here, and the ground is not very hard, what do ye say if we try a thraw, in a neighbourly way; and after that, we can cut a bit branch frae ane o' the allers, for a cudgelling bout. Ye will really very particularly oblige me, sir, if ye will."

The stranger readily replied, "With all my heart, friend—be it so."

Andrew cast off his jacket and bonnet, and, throwing them on the ground, his large water-dog, which was called Cæsar, placed itself beside them.

"Dinna thraw till I get a grip," cried Andrew, as the stranger had him already lifted from his feet—"that's no fair—it's no our country way o' thrawing."

The request was granted, and only granted, when Andrew measured his length upon the ground, and his dog sprang forward to attack the victor.

"Get back, Cæsar!" shouted its master—"It was a fair fa', I canna deny it! Sorrow tak me if I thought there was a man in ten parishes, could hae done the like! Gie's yer hand," said he, as he rose to his feet; "I'll thraw nor cudgel nae mair wi' you; but, as sure as my name's Andrew, I would bite my last coin through the middle, to gie ye the half o't, should ye want it. I like to meet wi' a good man, even though he should be better than mysel—and, in the particular o' wrestling, I allow that ye do bang me—though I dinna say how we might stand in other respects, for they've no been tried. But it was a fair fa'. 'Od, ye gied me a jirk as though I had been kissed by a lightning."

Before reaching Eyemouth, they came to a change-house by the wayside, which was kept by a widow, called Nancy Hewitt; and who was not only noted on account of the excellence of the liquor with which she supplied her customers, but who also had a daughter, named Janet, whose beauty rendered her the toast of the countryside.

"I am always in the habit," said Andrew, "o' stopping here for refreshment, and, if ye hae nae objections, we'll toom a stoup together."

"Cheerily, cheerily," answered his companion.

The fair daughter of the hostess was from home when they entered, and Andrew inquired after her with a solicitude that bespoke something more between them than mere acquaintanceship. The stranger slightly intimated that he had heard of her, and, after a few seemingly indifferent questions respecting her, for a few minutes became silent and thoughtful.

"Hoot, man," said Andrew, "I am vexed to see ye sae dowie—gie cauld care a kick like a foot ba'. This is nae time to be sad when the king is merry, and the country's merry, and we're a' happy thegither. Cheer up, I say, man—what's the matter wi' ye?—care has a strange look on a body's shouthers at seven or eight and twenty; and I dinna think ye can be mair. I am on the wrang side o' three and thirty, and I would snap my fingers at it, were it blawing its breath in my face as snell as a drift on an open moor! Losh man! what ails ye? Ye would say I had met wi' a friar in orders grey, lamenting owre the sins o' the world, and the poverty o' his pocket, instead o' a young bang fellow like you, that's a match for onybody. Come, here's to the health o' bonny Jenny Hewitt."

"With all my heart," said the stranger; and, pronouncing the name of the fair maiden, quaffed off his liquor.

"Now, that's wiselike; there's some spirit in that," said Andrew, following his example; "let's be merry while we can; that's aye my creed. The ne'er a grain o' guid, as I used to say to my mother, comes out o' melancholy. Let's hae a sang—I see you hae a singing face—or I'll gie ye ane mysel, to mak a beginning."

So saying, with a voice like thunder broken into music he sang as follows:—

In our young, young days,
When the gowany braes
Were our temple o' joy and glee,
Some dour auld body would shake his head,
And tell us our gladness away would flee,
And our hearts beat as heavy as lead.
Stupid auld body—silly auld body—
His mother spained him wi' a canker-worm
In our auld, auld days, the gowany braes
Are memory's rainbows owre time and storm.

In our proud young days,
When the gowany braes
Kenn'd the feet o' my love and me,
Some ill-matched carle would girn and say—
"Puir things! wi' a twalmonth's marriage, and ye
Will find love like a snaw-ba' decay."
Stupid auld carle—leein' auld carle—
His mother spained him wi' a canker-worm
In our auld, auld days, like gowany braes,
Our love unchang'd, has its youthfu' form.

In our grey-haired days,
When the gowany braes
Are owre steep for our feet to climb—
When her back is bowed, and her lovely o'e,
Once bricht as a beam frae the sun, is dim—
She'll be still my bit lassie to me.
Stupid auld body—wicked auld body—
Love, like the gowan, 's a winter liver
The smile o' a wife is the sun o' its life,
An' her bosom a brae where it blooms for ever.

A few minutes after Andrew had concluded his song, the fair daughter of their hostess entered the house. Andrew's first glance bespoke the lover, and the smile with which she returned it, shewed that the young fisherman and cadger was not an unaccepted wooer.

"By my sooth, fair maiden," said the stranger, "and thy sweet face doesna belie its fame; admiration fails in painting the loveliness of thy glowing cheeks, and thine een might make a moonbeam blush!"

He seemed practised in the art of gallantry, and poured into her ear other compliments in a similar strain. She hung her head, and turned it aside from him, as a woman will when flattered, or when she wishes to be flattered, but she did not rise to depart; and he felt that the incense which he offered to her beauty was not unacceptable. But the words and the attentions of the stranger were as daggers in the ears, and as wormwood in the heart of Andrew.

"The mischief rive his smooth tongue out o' his head!" thought Andrew; "but though I hae nae chance in speak-

ing balderdash wi' him, and though he did thraw me (and it was maybe by an unmanly quirk after a',) I'll let her see, if he has the glibest tongue, wha has the manlies arm!"

Neither love nor liquor, however, can allay the cravings of a hungry stomach, and the stranger (who evidently beguiled Andrew to drink more than the portion that ought to have fallen to him) called for something to eat, by way of a relish.

"O sir," said Nancy Hewitt, their hostess, "I'm verra sorry an' vexed that I hae naething in the house that I could gie ye—naething o' kitchen kind but the haddocks which Andrew left this forenoon; and I hae been sae thrang wi' folk gaun back an' forret to Lamberton, that they're no gutted yet. But if ye could tak them, ye are welcome to them."

"Gut two, then, good dame, and prepare them," said the stranger.

"I doubt, sir, twa winna do," said she, "for they're but sma'—I had better gut thrie."

"Certainly, *gut thrie*," said Andrew; "I brought the stranger in—and what is a haddie, or what are they worth?" for Andrew was anxious that the attention of his companion should be turned to anything, were it only withdrawn from Janet's face.

"You are a generous-hearted fellow," said the stranger, "and *gut thrie* shall I call you, if we meet again?"

Having therefore partaken of his repast, he proposed that they should again fill the stoup to friendship's growth; and although Andrew was wroth and jealous because of the words which he had spoken, and the attention he had shewn to fair Janet, he was not made of materials to resist the proposition to have another cup. But while they were yet drinking it, Andrew's pony, which had repeatedly raised its fore foot and struck it heavily on the ground, as if calling on its master to "come," being either scared, or its patience being utterly exhausted, set off at a canter from the door. He had rushed out without his bonnet, but, before he reached the road, it was fully forty yards a-head of him, and the louder he called on it, the nearer did the pony increase its pace to a gallop.

Andrew had scarce reached the door, when the stranger drew out a well-lined purse, and, after jerking it in his hand, he again placed it in his pocket, and more boldly than before renewed his gallantries to fair Janet. Emboldened, however, by what he conceived to have been his recent success, he now overshot the mark; and, as Andrew again reached the house, he was aroused by the cries of—

"Mother! Mother!—O Andrew! Andrew!"

Old Nancy's voice, too, broke upon his ears at its highest scolding pitch; but he could only distinguish the word "Scoundrel!"

He rushed into the room, and there he beheld his own Janet struggling in the embrace of the stranger.

"Villain!" cried Andrew, and the other started round—but with our fisherman at all times it was but a word and a blow—and his blood, which before had been heated and fermenting, now boiled—he raised his hand and dealt a blow at his companion, which, before he could parry it, laid him prostrate on the floor.

"Base loon!" cried the stranger, starting to his feet, "ye shall rue that blow." And he flung off his bonnet as if to return it.

"Hooly, billy," said Andrew, "there is as little manliness in fighting afore women as there was in your conduct to my bit Janet. But naething will gie me mair satisfaction than a round wi' ye—so wi' a' my heart—come to the door, and the best man for it."

Blood was issuing from the lips of the stranger, but he seemed nothing loath to accompany his quondam friend to the door. Janet, however, flung her arms around Andrew and the old woman stood between them, and implored them, for her sake, to keep the peace towards each other.

"O sir!" cried she, "let there be nae such carryings on in my house. My dochter and me are twa lone women, and the disgrace o' such an on-carrying, and at such a time, too, when the king an a' the gentry are in the neighbourhood, might be attended by there's nae saying what consequences to me and mine. Andrew, man, I wonder that ye haena mair sense."

"Sense!" returned Andrew, "I hae baith sense and feeling; and had it been the king himsel that I saw layin' a hand upon my Janet, I would hae served him in the same way that I did that man."

"Ye brag largely and freely, neighbour," said the stranger, throwing down a noble upon the table to pay for his entertainment; "but we shall meet again, where there are no women to interfere."

"Tak up your gowd, sir," replied Andrew, "for though I can boast o' nae sic siller, coppers will pay for a' that we have had. I brought you in here to treat ye, and our quarrel shall make nae difference as to that. Sae put up your gowd again; and as to meeting ye—I will meet ye the night, the morn, at ony place, or at ony time."

"I shall ask ye to meet me before ye dare," said the stranger; and leaving the coin upon the table as he left the house, "the gowd," added he, "will buy a gown and a bodice for the bosom of bonny Janet."

"I insist, sir, that you tak back the siller," cried Andrew.

"Dearsake, Andrew," said old Nancy, "he's no offering it to you! It's no you that has ony richt to refuse it." And taking up the piece, she examined it with a look of satisfaction, turning it round and round in her fingers—wrapped it in a small piece of linen rag, which lay in a corner of the room, and mechanically slipped it into her pocket. But it was neither every day, every week, nor every year, that Nancy Hewitt saw a coin of gold.

On the third day after the encounter between Strong Andrew and the stranger, the last and great day of the festivities on Lamberton took place; for on that day the royal bride was to arrive. The summer sun ushered in a glorious morning—its beams fell as a sheet of gold on the broad ocean, melting down and chaining its waves in repose. To the south lay Lindisferne, where St Cuthbert had wrought miracles, with the Ferne Isles where he lived, prayed, and died, and the proud rock on which King Ida reigned.* They seemed to sleep in the morning sunbeams—smiling in sleep. To the north was gigantic St Abb's, stretching out into the sea, as if reposing on its breast, amidst their feet and behind them, stretched the Moor and its purple heather; while, from the distance, the Cheviots looked down on them; and Hallidon, manured by the bones of slaughtered thousands, lay at their hand.

Yet, before sunrise, thousands were crowding to the gay scene, from every corner of Berwickshire, and from Roxburgh and the Eastern Lothian. The pavilions exhibited more costly decorations. Fair ladies, in their gayest attire, hung upon the arms of brave knights. An immense amphitheatre, where the great tourneyings and combats of the day were to take place, was seated round; and at one part of it was a richly canopied dais, where the young king, with his blooming queen, and the chief peers and ladies of both countries, were to sit, and witness the spectacle. Merry music reverbed in every direction, and the rocks and the glens re-echoed it; and ever and anon, as it pealed around, the assembled thousands shouted—"Long live our guid king James, and his bonny bride." Around the pavilions, too, strutted the courtiers, with the huge ruffles of their shirts reaching over their shoulders—their scented gloves—flat

* Bamborough.

bonnets, set on the one side of their heads like the cap of a modern dandy—spangled slippers, and a bunch of ribbons at their knees.

Amongst the more humble followers of the court, the immortal Dunbar, who was neglected in his own day, and who has been scarce less neglected and overlooked by posterity, was conspicuous. The poet-priest appeared to be a director of the intellectual amusements of the day. But although they delighted the multitude, and he afterwards immortalised the marriage of his royal master, by his exquisite poem of "The Thistle and the Rose," he was doomed to experience that genius could neither procure the patronage of kings nor church preferment; and, in truth, it was small preferment with which Dunbar would have been satisfied, for, after dancing the courtier in vain, (and they were then a race of beings of new-birth in Scotland,) we find him saying—

"Greit abbais graith I nill to gather,
But *ane kirk scant coverit with hadder*
For I of lytil wald be fane."

But, in the days of poor Dunbar, church patronage seems to have been conferred somewhat after the fashion of our own times, if not worse, for he again says—

"I knaw nocht how the kirk is gydit,
But benefices are nocht leil divydit;
Sum men hes sevin, and I nocht ane!"

All around wore a glad and a sunny look, and, while the morning was yet young, the sound of the salute from the cannon on the ramparts of Berwick, announced that the royal bride was approaching. The pavilions occupied a commanding situation on the heath, and the noble retinue of the princes could be observed moving along, their gay colours flashing in the sun, a few minutes after they issued from the walls of the town. A loud, a long, and a glad shout burst from the Scottish host, as they observed them approach, and hundreds of knights and nobles, dashing their glittering spurs into the sides of their proudly caparisoned steeds, rode forth to meet them, and to give their welcome, and offer their first homage to their future queen. There was a movement and a buzz of joy throughout the multitude; and they moved towards the ancient kirk.

The procession that accompanied the young princess of England into Scotland drew near; at its head rode the proud Earl of Surrey, the Earl of Northumberland, warden of the eastern marches, with many hundreds more, the flower of England's nobility and gentry, in their costliest array. In the procession, also, were thousands of the inhabitants of Northumberland; and the good citizens of Berwick-upon-Tweed, headed by their captain, Lord Thomas Darcy, and the porter of their gates, Mr Christopher Clapham, who was appointed one of the trustees on the part of the king of England, to see that the terms of his daughter's jointure were duly fulfilled.

There, however, was less eagerness on the part of the young monarch to behold his bride than on that of his subjects. We will not say that he had exactly imbibed the principles of a libertine, but it is well known that he was a *gallant* in the most *liberal* signification of the term, and that his amours extended to all ranks. He had, therefore, until he had well nigh reached his thirtieth year, evaded the curb of matrimony; and it was not until the necessity of his marriage, for the welfare of his country, was urged upon him by his nobles, that he agreed to take the hand of young Margaret of England. And of her it might have been truly said, that his

"Peggy was a young thing,
Just entering in her teens,"

for she had hardly completed her fourteenth year. But she was a well-grown girl, one on whom was opening the dawn of loveliest womanhood—she was beautiful, and the gentleness of her temper exceeded her beauty. Young James was the most chivalrous prince of his age; he worshipped beauty, and he could not appear coldly before one of the sex. And having come to the determination (though unwillingly) to give up his bachelorism, or, as he called it, liberty, he at length resolved to meet his bride as became one whose name was chronicled on the page of chivalry. He accordingly arrayed himself in a jacket of black velvet, edged with crimson, and the edgings bordered with a white fur. His doublet was of the finest satin, and of a violet colour; his spurs were of gold, his hose crimson, and precious stones bespangled his shirt-colour. The reiterated shouts of the multitude announced the approach of the queen, and, thus arrayed, the young king rode forth to greet her.

He entered the kirk, at the further end of which stood his fair bride between the Earls of Surrey and Northumberland. He started, he seemed to pause as his eyes fell upon her, but in a moment they were again lighted up with more than their wonted lustre. He had heard of her loveliness, but report had failed in doing justice to the picture. He approached to where she stood—he sank upon his knee—he raised her hand to his lips. The English nobility were struck with admiration at the delicate gallantry of the Scottish king.

I need not enter into the particulars of the ceremony. The youthful monarch conducted his yet more youthful bride and her attendants to his pavilion, while the heralds summoned the knights to the tournament, and prepared the other sports of the day. He took his lute and performed before her, and he sang words of his own composition, which related to her—for, like others of his family that had gone before, and that came after him, James had a spark of poetry in his soul.

"And dost thou understand this instrument, my own love?" said he, handing her the lute.

She blushed, and, taking it in her hand, began to "discourse most eloquent music," and James, filled with admiration, again sinking on his knee, and clasping his hands together, remained in this attitude before her, until the trumpets of the heralds announced that the knights were in readiness for the tournament.

Thousands were crowded around the circle in which the knights were to exhibit their skill and prowess. The royal party took their seats on the dais prepared for them. Several trials of skill, with sword, spear, and battle-axe, had taken place, and the spectators had awarded to the successful competitors their shouts of approbation, when the young king, who sat beside his queen, surrounded by the Lords Surrey and Northumberland, and the nobles of his kindred, together with the ladies of high degree, said—

"Troth, my lords, and whatever ye may think, they play it but coldly. Excuse me, your Majesty, for a few minutes," continued he, addressing his young bride; "I must put spirit into the spectacle."

Thus saying, the young monarch left the side of his bride, and, for a time, the same breaking of swords, spears, and battle-axes continued, when the chief herald of the tournament announced the Savage Knight. He entered the lists on foot, a visor concealing his face, arrayed as an Indian chief. He was clothed in a skin fitting tightly to his body, which gave half of it the appearance of nudity. In his left hand he held a javelin, in his right hand he brandished a spear.

"Who is he?" was the murmur that rang through the crowd; but no one could tell, and the knights in the area knew not. He walked towards the centre of the circle—he raised his spear—he shook it in defiance towards every knight that stood around—and they were there from England as well as from Scotland. But they seemed to demur amongst themselves who should first measure their strength with him. Not that they either feared his strength or skill,

but that, knowing the eccentricity of the king, they apprehended that the individual whom he had sent against them, in such an uncouth garb, and who was to hold combat with them at such extravagant odds, they being on horseback, while he was on foot, might be no true knight, but some base-born man whom the monarch had sent against them for a jest's sake. But, while they communed together, the *Savage Knight* approached near where they stood, and, crying to them, said—

"What is it ye fear, Sir Knights, that ye hold consultation together. Is it my mailed body, or panoplyed steed?—or fear ye that my blood is base enough to rust your swords? Come on, ye are welcome to a trial of its colour."

Provoked by his taunt, several sprang from their horses, and appeared emulous who should encounter him. But, at the very onset, the Savage Knight wrested the sword of the first who opposed him from his hand. In a few minutes the second was in like manner discomfited, and, after a long and desperate encounter, the third was hurled to the ground, and the weapon of the wild knight was pointed to his throat. The spectators rent the air with acclamations. Again the unknown stood in the midst of the circle, and brandished his spear in defiance. But enough had been seen of his strength and his skill, and no man dared to encounter him. Again the multitude shouted more loudly, and he walked around the amphitheatre, bowing lowly towards the spectators, and receiving their congratulations.

Now, in the midst of the motley congregation, and almost at the point farthest removed from the dais of royalty, stood none other than Strong Andrew, with bonny Janet under his arm; and it so happened, that when the Savage Knight was within view of where Andrew stood, his visor fell, and, though it was instantly replaced, it enabled our sturdy fisherman to obtain a glance of his countenance, and he exclaimed—

"'Od save us, Janet, woman, look, look, look!—do ye see wha it is! Confound me, if it isna the very chield that I gied the clout in the lug to in your mother's the other night for his good behaviour. Weel, as sure as death, I gie him credit for what he has done—he's ta'en the measure o' their feet, onyway! A knight!—he's nae mair a knight than I'm ane—but it shews that knights are nae better than other folk."

There was a pause for a short space—again the monarch sat upon the dais by the side of his blooming bride. The great spectacle of the day was about to be exhibited. This spectacle was a battle in earnest between an equal number of Borderers and Highlanders. The heralds and the marshals of the combat rode round the amphitheatre, and proclaimed that rewards would be bestowed on all who signalized themselves by their courage, and to the most distinguished a purse of gold would be given by the hands of the king himself. Numbers of armed clansmen and Borderers entered the area. Andrew's fingers began to move, and his fists were suddenly clenched, relaxed, and clenched again. He began to move his shoulders also. His whole body became restless, and his soul manifested the same symptoms, and he half involuntarily exclaimed—

"Now, here's a chance!"

"Chance for what, Andrew dear?" inquired Janet, tremulously—for she knew his nature.

"To mak a fortune in a moment," returned he, eagerly—"to be married the morn! The king is to gie a purse o' gold!"

Now, the only obstacle that stood between the immediate union of Andrew and Janet was his poverty.

"Oh, come awa, Andrew, love," said she, imploringly, and pulling his arm as she spoke; "I see your drift!—come awa—come awa—we have seen enough. Dinna be after ony sic nonsense, or thrawing awa your life on sic an errand."

"Wheesht, Janet, hinny—wheesht," said he; "dinna be talking havers. Just stand you here—there's not the smallest danger—I'll be back to ye in ten minutes or a quarter of an hour at the utmost—ye may tak my word upon that."

"Andrew!" cried she, "are ye out o' yer mind athegither—or do ye want to put me out o' mine? I really think it looks like it! O man, would ye be guilty o' murdering yoursel, I may say!—come awa—come awa, dear—for I'll no stand to see it."

"Hoot, Janet, hinny," returned he, "come, dear, dinna be silly."

Now, the number of the Highland party was completed, and they stood, a band of hardy, determined, and desperate-looking men; but the party of the Borderers was one defi cient.

"Is there not another," cried the herald, "to stand forth, and maintain with his sword the honour and courage of the Borders?"

"Yes! here am I!" shouted Andrew, and drawing Janet's arm from his; "now, dearest," added he, hastily, "just hae patience—just stand here for ten minutes—and I'll let ye see what I can do."

She would have detained him; but in a moment he sprang into the amphitheatre, and exclaimed—

"Now, Sir Knights, ye that hae been trying yer hands at the tourneyings, will ony o' ye hae the guidness to obleege me wi' the loan o' yer sword for a wee while, and I'll be bond for ye I'll no disgrace it—I'll try the temper o' it in earnest."

Andrew instantly had a dozen to choose upon; and he took his place amongst the Borderers.

When he joined them, those who knew him, said—"The day is ours—Andrew is a host in himsel."

The marshals gave the signal for the onset; and a deadly, a savage onset it was. Swords were shivered to the hilt. Men, who had done each other no wrong, who had never met before, grasped each other by the throat—the Highland dirk and the Border knife were drawn. Men plunged them into each other—they fell together—they rolled, the one over the other, in the struggles and the agonies of death. The wounded strewed the ground—they strove to crawl from the strife of their comrades. The dead lay upon the dying, and the dying on the dead. Death had reaped a harvest from both parties; and no man could tell on which side would lie the victory. Yet no man could stand before the sword-arm of Andrew—antagonist after antagonist fell before him. He rushed to every part of the combat; and wheresoever he went, the advantage was in favour of the Borderers. He was the champion of the field—the hero of the fight. The king gave a signal, (perhaps because his young queen was horrified with the game of butchery,) and at the command of the marshals the combatants on both sides laid down their arms. Reiterated shouts again rang from the spectators. Some clapped their hands and cried—"Eyemouth yet!"—"Wha's like Andrew!"—"We'll carry him hame shouther high!" cried some of his townsmen.

During the combat, poor Janet had been blind with anxiety, and was supported in the arms of the spectators who saw him rush from her side. But as the shouts of his name burst on her ear, consciousness returned; and she beheld him, with the sword in his hand, hastening towards her. Yet ere he had reached where she stood, he was summoned, by the men-at-arms, who had kept the multitude from pressing into the amphitheatre, to appear before the King, to receive from his hands the promised reward.

Anxious as he had been to obtain the prize, poor Andrew, notwithstanding his heroism, trembled at the thought of appearing in the presence of a monarch. His idea of the

king was composed of imaginings of power, and greatness, and wisdom, and splendour—he knew him to be a man, but he did not think of him as such. And he said to those who summoned him to the royal presence—

"Oh, save us a', sirs! what shall I say to him? or what will he say to me? How shall I behave? I would rather want the siller than gang wi' ye!"

In this state of tremor and anxiety, Andrew was conducted towards the canopied dais before the Majesty of Scotland. He was led to the foot of the steps which ascended to the seat where the monarch and his bride sat. His eyes were rivetted to the ground, and he needed not to doff his bonnet, for he had lost it in the conflict.

"Look up, brave cock o' the Borders," said the monarch; "certes, man, ye would hae an ill-far'd face if ye needed to hide it, after exhibiting sic a heart and arm."

Andrew raised his head in confusion; but scarce had his eyes fallen on the countenance of the king, when he started back, as though he beheld the face of a spirit.

"Ha! traitor!" exclaimed the monarch, and a frown gathered on his brow.

In a moment, Andrew perceived that his victor-wrestler—his crony in Lucky Hewitt's—the tempter of his Janet—the man whom he had felled with a blow, and whose blood he had drawn—and the King of Scotland, was one and the same person.

"Guid gracious!" exclaimed Andrew, "I'm a done man!"

"Seize him!" said the king.

But ere he had said it, Andrew recollected that if he had a good right hand, he had a pair of as good heels; and if he had trusted to the one a few minutes before, he would trust to the latter now, and away he bounded like a startled deer, carrying his sword in his hand.

A few seconds elapsed before the astonished servants of the king recovered presence of mind to pursue him. As he fled, the dense crowd that encircled the amphitheatre surrounded him; but many of them knew him—none had forgotten his terrible courage—and, although they heard the cry re-echoed by the attendants of the monarch to seize him, they opened an avenue when he approached, and permitted him to rush through them. Though, perhaps, the fear of the sword which he brandished in his hand, and the terrible effects of which they had all witnessed, contributed not less than admiration of his courage, to procure him his ready egress from amongst them.

He rushed towards the sea-banks, and suddenly disappeared where they seemed precipitous, and was lost to his pursuers; and after an hour's search, they returned to the king, stating that they had lost trace of him, and could not find him.

"Go back, ye bull-dogs!" exclaimed our monarch, angrily; "seek him—find him—nor again enter our presence until ye again bring him bound before us at Holyrood."

They therefore again proceeded in quest of the unfortunate fugitive; and the monarch having conducted his royal bride to the pavilion, cast off his jacket of black velvet, and arrayed himself in one of cloth of gold, with edgings of purple and of sable fur. His favourite steed, caparisoned to carry two, and with its panoply embroidered with jewels, was brought before his pavilion. The monarch approached the door, leading his queen in his hand. He lightly vaulted into the saddle—he again took the hand of his bride, and placed her behind him; and in this manner, a hundred peers and nobles following in his train, the King of Scotland conducted his young queen through the land, and to the palace of his fathers. The people shouted as the royal cavalcade departed, and Scotch and English voices joined in the cry of—"Long live Scotland's king and queen." Yet there were some who were silent, and who thought that poor Andrew, the fisherman, the champion of the day, had been cruelly treated, though they knew not his offence. Those who knew him, said—

"It bangs a'! we're sure Andrew never saw the king in his life before. He never was ten miles out o' Eyemouth in his days. We ha'e kenned him since a callant, and never heard a word laid against his character. The king must hae taken him for somebody else—and he was foolish to run for it."

But, while the multitude shouted, and joined in the festivities of the day, there was one that hurried through the midst of them, wringing her hands, and weeping as she went—even poor Janet. At the moment when she was roused from the stupefaction of feeling produced by the horrors of the conflict, and when her arms were outstretched to welcome her hero, as he was flying to them in triumph, she had seen him led before his prince, to receive his praise and his royal gifts; but, instead of these, she heard him denounced as a *traitor*, as the king's words were echoed round. She beheld him fly for safety, and armed men pursuing him. She was bewildered—wildly bewildered. But every motion gave place to anguish; and she returned to her mother's house alone, and sank upon her bed, and wept.

She could scarce relate to her parent the cause of her grief; but others, who had been witnesses of the regal festival, called at Widow Hewitt's for refreshment, as they returned home, and from them she gathered that her intended son-in-law had been the champion of the day; but that, when he had been led forward to receive the purse from the hands of the king, the monarch, instead of bestowing it, denounced him as a traitor; "and when he fled," added they, "his majesty ordered him to be brought to him dead or alive!"—for, in the days of our fathers, men used the *license* that is exemplified in the fable of the Black Crows, quite as much as it is used now. The king certainly had commanded that Andrew should be brought to him; but he had said nothing of his being brought *dead*.

Nancy lifted her hands in astonishment as high as her ceiling, (and it was not a high one, and was formed of rushes)—"Preserve us, sirs!" said she, "ye perfectly astonish me athegither! Poor chield! I'm sure Andrew wadna harm a dog! A *traitor!* say ye, the king caed him? That's something very bad, isn't it? An' surely———na, na, Andrew couldna be guilty o't—the king maun be a strange sort o' man."

But, about midnight, a gentle knocking was heard at the window, and a well-known voice said, in an under tone—

"Janet! Janet! it is me!"

"It is *him*, mother! it is Andrew! they haena gotten him yet!" And she ran to the door and admitted him; and, when he had entered, she continued, "O Andrew! what, in the name o' wonder, is the meaning o' the king's being in a passion at ye? What did ye say or do to him?—or what can be the meaning o't?"

"It is really very singular, Andrew," interrupted the old woman; "what *hae* ye done?—what *is really the meaning o't?*"

"Meaning!" said Andrew, "ye may weel ask that! I maun get awa' into England this very night, or my life's no worth a straw; and it's ten chances to ane that it may be safe there. Wha is the king, think ye?—now, just think wha?"

"Wha *is* the king!" said Nancy, with a look, and in a tone of astonishment—"I dinna comprehend ye, Andrew—what do ye mean? Wha can the king be, but just the king."

"Oh!" said Andrew, "ye mind the chield that cam here wi' me the other night, that left the gowd noble for the three haddies that him and I had atween us, and that I gied a clout in the haffets to, and brought the blood owre his lips for his behaviour to Jenny!—*yon was the king!*"

"Yon the king!" cried Janet.

"Yon the king!" exclaimed her mother; "and hae I really had the king o' Scotland in my house, sitting at my fireside, and cooked a supper for him! Weel, I think, yon the king! Aha! he's a bonny man!"

"O mother!" exclaimed Janet; "bonny here, bonny there, dinna talk sae—he is threatening the life o' poor Andrew, who has got into trouble and sorrow on my account. Oh, dear me! what shall I do, Andrew!—Andrew!" she continued, and wrung her hands.

"There's just ae thing, hinny," said he; "I must endeavour to get to the other side o' the Tweed, before folk are astir in the morning; so I maun leave ye directly, but I just ventured to come and bid ye fareweel. And there's just ae thing that I hae to say and to request, and that is, that, if I darena come back to Scotland to marry ye, that ye will come owre to England to me, as soon as I can get into some way o' providing for ye. Will ye promise, Jenny?"

"O yes! yes, Andrew!" she cried, "I'll come to ye—for it is entirely on my account that ye've to flee. But I'll do mair than that; for this very week I will go to Edinburgh, and I will watch in the way o' the king and the queen, and on my knees I'll implore him to pardon ye; and, if he refuses, I ken what I ken."

"Na, na, Jenny, dear," said he, "dinna think o' that—I wad rather suffer banishment, and live in jeopardy for ever, than that ye should place yoursel in his power or in his presence. But what do ye ken, dear?"

"Ken!" replied she; "if he refuses to pardon ye, I'll threaten him to tell the queen what he said to me, and what offers he made to me when ye was running out after the powny."

Andrew was about to answer her, when he started at a heavy sound of footsteps approaching the cottage.

"They are in search o' me!" he exclaimed.

Instantly a dozen armed men entered the cottage.

"We have found him," cried they to their companions without; "the traitor is here."

Andrew, finding that resistance would be hopeless, gave up the sword which he still carried, and suffered them to bind his arms. Jenny clung around his neck and wept. Her mother sat speechless with terror.

"Fareweel, Jenny, dear!" said Andrew—"fareweel!—Dinna distress yoursel sae—things mayna turn out sae ill as we apprehend. I can hardly think that the king will be sae cruel and sae unjust as to tak my life. Is that no your opinion, sirs?" added he, addressing the armed men.

"We are not to be your judges," said he who appeared to be their leader; "ye are our prisoner, by his Majesty's command, and that is a' we ken about the matter. But ye are denounced as a traitor, and the king spares nane such."

Poor Janet shrieked as she heard the hopeless and cruel words, and again cried—

"But the queen shall ken a'!"

Jenny's arms were rudely torn from around his neck, and he was dragged from the house; and his arms, as I have stated, being bound, he was placed behind a horseman, and his body was fastened to that of the trooper. In this manner he was conducted to Edinburgh, where he was cast into prison to await his doom.

Within two days, Janet and her mother were seized also, at the very moment when the former was preparing to set out to implore his pardon—and accused of harbouring and concealing in their house one whom the king had denounced as guilty of treason.

Janet submitted to her fate without a murmur, and only said—"Weel, if Andrew be to suffer upon my account, I am willing to do the same for his. But surely neither you nor the king can be sae cruel as to harm my poor auld mother!"

"Oh, dear! dear!" cried the old woman to those who came to apprehend her—"Was there ever the like o' this seen or heard tell o'! Before I kenned wha the king was, I took him to be a kind lad and a canny lad, and he canna say but I shewed him every attention, and even prevented Andrew frae striking him again; and what gratification can it be to him to tak awa the life o' a lone widow, and a bit helpless lassie?"

But, notwithstanding her remonstrances, Nancy Hewitt and her beautiful daughter were conducted as prisoners to the metropolis.

On the fourth day of his confinement, Andrew was summoned before King James and his nobles, to receive his sentence and undergo its punishment. The monarch, in the midst of his lords, sat in a large apartment in the castle; armed men, with naked swords in their hands, stood around, and the frown gathered on his face as the prisoner was led into his presence.

Andrew bowed before the monarch, then raised his head and looked around, with an expression on his countenance which shewed that, although he expected death, he feared it not.

"How now, ye traitor knave!" said the king, sternly; "do ye deny that ye raised your hand against our royal person?

"No!" was the brief and bold reply of the dauntless fisherman.

"Ye have heard, kinsmen," continued the monarch, "his confession of his guiltiness from his own lips—what punishment do ye award him?"

"Death! the traitor's doom!" replied the nobles.

"Nay, troth," said James, "we shall be less just than merciful; and because of his brave bearing at Lamberton, his life shall be spared—but, certes, the hand that was raised against our person shall be struck off.—Prepare the block!"

Now, the block was brought into the midst of the floor, and Andrew was made to kneel, and his arm was bared and placed upon it—and the executioner stood by with his drawn sword, waiting the signal from the king to strike off the hand, when the fair young queen, with her attendants, entered the apartment. The king rose to meet her, saying—

"What would my fair queen?"

"A boon! a boon! my liege," playfully replied the blooming princess; "that ye strike not off the hand of this audacious man, but that ye chain it for his life."

"Be it so, my fair one," said the king; and, taking the sword of the executioner in his hand, he touched the kneeling culprit on the shoulder with it, saying—"Rise up Sir Andrew Gut-thrie, and thus do we chain your offending hand!"—the young queen at the same moment raised a veil with which she had concealed the features of bonny Janet, and the king taking her hand, placed it in Andrew's.

"My conscience!" exclaimed Andrew, "am I in existence!—do I dream, or what?—O Jenny, woman!—O your Majesty!—what shall I say?"

"Nothing," replied the monarch, "but the king cam' in the cadger's way—and Sir Andrew Gut-thrie and his bonny bride shall be provided for."

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE FAA'S REVENGE.

A TALE OF THE BORDER GIPSIES.

BROWN October was drawing to a close—the breeze had acquired a degree of sharpness too strong to be merely termed bracing—and the fire, as the saying is, was becoming the best flower in the garden—for the hardiest and the latest plants had either shed their leaves, or their flowers had shrivelled at the breath of approaching winter—when a stranger drew his seat towards the parlour fire of the Three-Half-Moons inn, in Rothbury. He had sat for the space of half an hour when a party entered, who, like himself, (as appeared from their conversation,) were strangers, or rather visiters of the scenery, curiosities, and antiquities in the vicinity. One of them having ordered the waiter to bring each of them a glass of brandy and warm water, without appearing to notice the presence of the first mentioned stranger, after a few remarks on the objects of interest in the neighbourhood, the following conversation took place amongst them:—

"Why," said one, "but even Rothbury here, secluded as it is from the world, and shut out from the daily intercourse of men, is a noted place. It was here that the ancient and famous northern bard, and unrivalled ballad writer, Bernard Rumney, was born, bred, and died. Here, too, was born Dr Brown, who, like Young and Home, united the characters of divine and dramatist, and was the author of '*Barbarossa*,' '*The Cure of Saul*,' and other works of which posterity and his country are proud. The immediate neighbourhood, also, was the birth-place of the inspired boy, the heaven-taught mathematician, George Coughran, who knew no rival, and who bade fair to eclipse the glory of Newton, but whom death struck down ere he had reached the years of manhood."

"Why, I can't tell," said another; "I don't know much about what you've been talking of—but I know, for one thing, that Rothbury was a famous place for every sort of games; and, at Fastren's E'en times, the rule was, every male inhabitant above eight years of age to pay a shilling, or out to the foot-ball. It was noted for its game-cocks, too—they were the best breed on the Borders."

"May be so," said the first speaker; "but though I should be loath to see the foot-ball, or any other innocent game which keeps up a manly spirit, put down, yet I do trust that the brutal practice of cock-fighting will be abolished, not only on the Borders, but throughout every country which professes the name of Christian; and I rejoice that the practice is falling into disrepute. But, although my hairs are not yet honoured with the silver tints of age, I am old enough to remember, that, when a boy at school on the Scottish side of the Border, at every Fastren's E'en which you have spoken of, every schoolboy was expected to provide a cock for the battle, or main, and the teacher or his deputy presided as umpire. The same practice prevailed on the Southern Border. It is a very old, savage amusement, even in this country; and perhaps the preceptors of youth, in former days, considered it *classical*, and that it would instil into their pupils sentiments of emulation; inasmuch as the practice is said to have taken rise from Themistocles perceiving two cocks tearing at and fighting with each other, while marching his army against the Persians, when he called upon his soldiers to observe them, and remarked that they neither fought for territory, defence of country, nor for glory, but they fought because the one would not yield to, or be defeated by the other; and he desired his soldiers to take a *moral* lesson from the barn-door fowls. Cock-fighting thus became among the heathen Greeks a political precept and a religious observance—and the *Christian* inhabitants of Britain, disregarding the *religious and political moral*, kept up the practice, adding to it more disgusting barbarity, for *their amusement*."

"Coom," said a third, who, from his tongue, appeared to be a thorough Northumbrian, "we wur talking aboot Rothbury, but you are goin' to give us a regular sarmin on cock-fighting. Let's hae none o' that. You was saying what clever chaps had been born here—but none o' ye mentioned Jamie Allan, the gipsy and Northumberland piper, who was born here as weel as the best o' them. But I hae heard that Rothbury, as weel as Yetholm and Tweedmouth Moor, was a great resort for the Faa or gipsy gangs, in former times. Now, I understand that thae folk were a sort o' bastard Egyptians; and though I am nae scholar, it strikes me forcibly, that the meaning o' the word, *gipsies*, is just *Egypts*, or *Gypties*—a contraction and corruption o' *'Gyptian!*"

"Gipsies," said he who spoke of Rumney and Brown, and abused the practice of cock-fighting, "still do in some degree, and formerly did in great numbers, infest this county; and I will tell you a story concerning them."

"Do so," said the thorough Northumbrian; "I like a story when it's weel put thegither. The gipsies were queer folk. I've heard my faither tell many a funny thing about them, when he used to whistle 'Felton Loanin,' which was made by awd piper Allan—Jamie's faither." And here the speaker struck up a lively air, which, to the stranger by the fire, seemed a sort of parody on the well-known tune of "Johnny Cope."

The other then proceeded with his tale, thus—

You have all heard of the celebrated Johnny Faa, the Lord and Earl of Little Egypt, who penetrated into Scotland in the reign of James IV., and with whom that gallant monarch was glad to conclude a treaty. Johnny was not only the king, but the first of the Faa gang of whom we have mention. I am not aware that gipsies get the name of Faas anywhere but upon the Borders; and, though it is difficult to account for the name satisfactorily, it is said to have had its origin from a family of the name of *Fall* or *Fa'*, who resided here, (in Rothbury,) and that their superiority in their cunning and desperate profession, gave the same cognomen to all and sundry who followed the same mode of life upon the Borders. One thing is certain—that the name *Faa* not only was given to individuals whose surname might be *Fall*, but to the *Winters* and *Clarkes*—*id genus omne*—gipsy families well known on the Borders. Since waste lands, which were their hiding places and resorts, began to be cultivated, and especially since the sun of knowledge snuffed out the taper

of superstition and credulity, most of them are beginning to form a part of society, to learn trades of industry, and live with men. Those who still prefer their fathers' vagabond mode of life—finding that, in the northern counties, their old trade of fortune-telling is at a discount, and that thieving has thinned their tribe and is dangerous—now follow the more useful and respectable callings of muggers, besom-makers, and tinkers. I do not know whether, in etiquette, I ought to give precedence to the besom-maker or tinker; though, as compared with them, I should certainly suppose that the "muggers" of the present day belong to the Faa aristocracy; if it be not that they, like others, derive their nobility from descent of blood rather than weight of pocket—and that, after all, the mugger with his encampment, his caravans, horses, crystal, and crockery, is but a mere wealthy plebeian or *bourgeious* in the vagrant community.—But to my tale.

On a dark and tempestuous night in the December of 1628, a Faa gang requested shelter in the out-houses of the laird of Clennel. The laird himself had retired to rest; and his domestics being fewer in number than the Faas, they feared to refuse them their request.

"Ye shall have up-putting for the night, good neighbours," said Andrew Smith, who was a sort of major-domo in the laird's household, and he spoke in a tone of mingled authority and terror. "But, sir," added he, addressing the chief of the tribe—"I will trust to your honour that ye will allow none o' your folk to be making free with the kye, or the sheep, or the poultry—that is, that ye will not allow them to mistake ony o' them for your own, lest it bring me into trouble. For the laird has been in a fearful rage at some o' your people lately; and if onything were to be amissing in the morning, or he kenned that ye had been here, it might be as meikle as my life is worth."

"Tush, man!" said Willie Faa, the king of the tribe, "ye dree the death ye'll never die. Willie Faa and his folk maun live as weel as the laird o' Clennel. But, there's my thumb, not a four-footed thing, nor the feather o' a bird, shall be touched by me or mine. But I see the light is out in the laird's chamber window—he is asleep and high up amang the turrets—and wherefore should ye set human bodies in byres and stables in a night like this, when your Ha' fire is bleezing bonnily, and there is room eneugh around it for us a'? Gie us a seat by the cheek o' your hearth, and ye shall be nae loser; and I promise ye that we shall be off, bag and baggage, before the skreigh o' day, or the laird kens where his head lies."

Andrew would fain have refused this request, but he knew that it amounted to a command; and, moreover, while he had been speaking with the chief of the tribe, the maid-servants of the household, who had followed him and the other men-servants to the door, had divers of them been solicited by the females of the gang to have futurity revealed to them. And whether it indeed be that curiosity is more powerful in woman than in man, (as it is generally said to be,) I do not profess to determine; but certain it is, that the laird of Clennel's maid-servants, immediately on the hint being given by the gipsies, felt a very ardent desire to have a page or two from the sybilline leaves read to them—at least that part of them which related to their future husbands, and the time when they should obtain them. Therefore, they backed the petition or command of King Willie, and said to Andrew—

"Really, Mr Smith, it would be very unchristian-like to put poor wandering folk into cauld out-houses on a night like this; and, as Willie says, there is room enough in the Ha'."

"That may be a' very true, lasses," returned Andrew, "but only ye think what a dirdum there would be if the laird were to waken or get wit o't!"

"Fearna the laird," said Elspeth, the wife of King Willie—"I will lay a spell on him that he canna be roused frae sleep, till I, at sunrise, wash my hands in Darden Lough."

The sybil then raised her arms and waved them fantastically in the air, uttering, as she waved them, the following uncouth rhymes, by way of incantation—

"Bonny Queen Mab, bonny Queen Mab,
Wave ye your wee bits o' poppy wings,
Owre Clennel's laird, that he may sleep
Till I hae washed where Darden springs."

Thus assured, Andrew yielded to his fears and the wishes of his fellow-servants, and ushered the Faas into his master's hall for the night. But scarce had they taken their seats upon the oaken forms around the fire, when—

"Come," said the Faa king, "the night is cold—pinching cold, Mr Smith; and, while the fire warms without, is there naething in the cellar that will warm within? See to it, Andrew, man—thou art no churl, or thy face is fause."

"Really, sir," replied Andrew—and, in spite of all his efforts to appear at ease, his tongue faltered as he spoke—"I'm not altogether certain what to say upon that subject; for ye observe that our laird is really a very singular man; ye might as weel put your head in the fire there as displease him in the smallest; and though Heaven kens that I would gie to you just as freely as I would tak to mysel, yet ye'll observe that the liquor in the cellars is not mine but his—and they are never sae weel plenished but I believe he would miss a thimble-fu'. But there is some excellent cold beef in the pantry, if ye could put up wi' the like o' it, and the home-brewed which we servants use."

"Andrew," returned the Faa king, proudly—"castle have I none, flocks and herds have I none, neither have I haughs where the wheat, and the oats, and the barley grow—but, like Ishmael, my great forefather, every man's hand is against me, and mine against them—yet, when I am hungry, I never lack the flesh-pots o' my native land, where the moorfowl and the venison make brown broo together. Cauld meat agrees nae wi' my stomach, and servants' drink was never brewed for the lord o' Little Egypt. Ye comprehend me, Andrew?"

"Oh, I daresay I do, sir," said the chief domestic of the house of Clennel—"but only, as I have said, ye will recollect that the drink is not mine to give; and if I venture upon a jug, I hope ye winna think o' asking for another."

"We shall try it," said the royal vagrant.

Andrew, with trembling and reluctance, proceeded to the cellar, and returned with a large earthen vessel filled with the choicest home-brewed, which he placed upon a table in the midst of them.

"Then each took a smack
Of the old black-jack,
While the fire burned in the hall."

The Faa king pronounced the liquor to be palatable, and drank to his better acquaintance with the cellars of the laird of Clennel; and his gang followed his example.

Now, I should remark, that Willie Faa, the chief of his tribe, was a man of gigantic stature; the colour of his skin was the dingy brown peculiar to his race; his arms were of remarkable length, and his limbs a union of strength and lightness; his raven hair was mingled with grey; while in his dark eyes, the impetuosity of youth and the cunning of age seemed blended together. It is in vain to speak of his dress, for it was changed daily as his circumstances or avocations directed. He was ever ready to assume all characters, from the courtier down to the mendicant. Like his wife, he was skilled in the reading of no book but the book of fate. Now, Elspeth was a less agreeable personage to look upon than even her husband. The hue of her skin was as dark as his. She was also of his age—a woman of full fifty. She was the tallest female in her tribe; but her stoutness took away from her stature. Her eyes were small and piercing, her nose aquiline, and her upper lip was "bearded like the pard."

While her husband sat at his carousals, and handing the

beverage to his followers and the domestics of the house, Elspeth sat examining the lines upon the palms of the hands of the maid-servants—pursuing her calling as a spaewife. And ever as she traced the lines of matrimony, the sybil would pause and exclaim—

"Ha!—money!—money!—cross my loot again, hinny. There is fortune before ye! Let me see! A spur!—a sword!—a shield!—a gowden purse! Heaven bless ye! They are there!—there, as plain as a pike-staff; they are a' in your path. But cross my loof again, hinny, for until siller again cross it, I canna see whether they are to be yours or no."

Thus did Elspeth go on until her "loof had been crossed" by the last coin amongst the domestics of the house of Clennel; and when these were exhausted, their trinkets were demanded and given to assist the spell of the prophetess. Good fortune was prognosticated to the most of them, and especially to those who crossed the loof of the reader of futurity most freely; but to others, perils, and sudden deaths, and disappointments in love, and grief in wedlock, were hinted; though to all and each of these forebodings, a something like hope—an undefined way of escape—was pended.

Now, as the voice of Elspeth rose in solemn tones, and as the mystery of her manner increased, not only were the maid-servants stricken with awe and reverence for the wondrous woman, but the men-servants also began to inquire into their fate. And, as they extended their hands, and Elspeth traced the lines of the past upon them, ever and anon she spoke strange words, which intimated secret facts; and she spoke also of love-makings and likings; and ever, as she spoke, she would raise her head and grin a ghastly smile, now at the individual whose hand she was examining, and again at a maid-servant whose fortune she had read; while the former would smile and the latter blush, and their fellow domestics exclaim—

"That's wonderfu'!—that dings a'.—ye are queer folk!—hoo in the world do ye ken?"

Even the curiosity of Mr Andrew Smith was raised, and his wonder excited; and, after he had quaffed his third cup with the gipsy king, he, too, reverentially approached the bearded princess, extending his hand, and begging to know what futurity had in store for him.

She raised it before her eyes, she rubbed hers over it.

"It is a dark and a difficult hand," muttered she: "here are ships and the sea, and crossing the sea, and great danger, and a way to avoid it—but the gowd!—the gowd that's there! And yet ye may lose it a'! Cross my loof, sir—yours is an ill hand to spae—for it's set wi' fortune, and danger, and adventure."

Andrew gave her all the money in his possession. Now, it was understood that she was to return the money and the trinkets with which her loof had been crossed; and Andrew's curiosity overcoming his fears, he ventured to entrust his property in her keeping—for, as he thought, it was not every day that people could have everything that was to happen unto them revealed. But when she had again looked upon his hand—

"It winna do," said she—"I canna see owre the danger ye hae to encounter, the seas ye hae to cross, and the mountains o' gowd that lie before ye yet—ye maun cross my loof again." And when, with a woful countenance, he stated that he had crossed it with his last coin—

"Ye hae a chronometer, man," said she—"it tells you the minutes now, it may enable me to shew ye those that are to come!"

Andrew hesitated, and, with doubt and unwillingness, placed the chronometer in her hand.

Elspeth wore a short cloak of faded crimson; and in a sort of pouch in it, every coin, trinket, and other article of value which was put into her hands, were deposited, in order, as she stated, to forward her mystic operations. Now, the chronometer had just disappeared in the general receptacle of offerings to the oracle, when heavy footsteps were heard descending the staircase leading to the hall. Poor Andrew, the ruler of the household, gasped—the blood forsook his cheeks, his knees involuntarily knocked one against another, and he stammered out—

"For Heeven's sake, gie me my chronometer!—Oh, gie me it!—we are a' ruined!"

"It canna be returned till the spell's completed," rejoined Elspeth, in a solemn and determined tone—and her countenance betrayed nothing of her dupe's uneasiness; while her husband deliberately placed his right hand upon a sort of dagger which he wore beneath a large coarse jacket that was loosely flung over her shoulders. The males in his retinue, who were eight in number, followed his example.

In another moment, the laird, with wrath upon his countenance, burst into the hall.

"Andrew Smith," cried he, sternly, and stamping his foot fiercely on the floor, "what scene is this I see? Answer me, ye betrayer o' trust?—ye robber, answer me?—ye shall hang for it!"

"O sir! sir!" groaned Andrew, "mercy!—mercy!—O sir!" and he wrung his hands together and shook exceedingly.

"Ye fause knave!" continued the laird, grasping him by the neck—and dashing him from him, Andrew fell flat upon the floor, and his terror had almost shook him from his feet before—"Speak, ye fause knave!" resumed the laird; "what means your carousin wi' sic a gang? Ye robber, speak!" And he kicked him with his foot as he lay upon the ground.

"O sir!—mercy, sir!" vociferated Andrew, in the stupor and wildness of terror; "I canna speak!—ye hae killed me outright! I am dead—stone dead! But it wasna my blame—they'll a' say that, if they speak the truth."

"Out! out, ye thieves!—ye gang o' plunderers, born to the gallows!—out o' my house!" added the laird, addressing Willie Faa and his followers.

"Thieves! ye acred loon!" exclaimed the Faa king, starting to his feet, and drawing himself up to his full height—"wha does the worm that burrows in the lands o' Clennel ca' thieves? Thieves, say ye!—speak such words to your equals but no to me. Your forebears came owre wi' the Norman, invaded the nation, and seized upon land—mine invaded it also, and only laid a tax upon the flocks, the cattle, and the poultry—and wha ca' ye thieves?—or wi' what grace do ye speak the word?"

"Away, ye audacious vagrant!" continued the laird; "ken ye not that the king's authority is in my hands?—and for your former plunderings, if I again find ye setting foot upon ground o' mine, on the nearest tree ye shall find a gibbet."

"Boast awa—boast awa, man," said Willie; "ye are safe here, for me and mine winna harm ye; and it is a fougie cock indeed that darena craw in its ain barn-yard. But wait until the day when we may meet upon the wide moor, wi' only twa bits o' steel between us, and see wha shall brag then."

"Away!—instantly away!" exclaimed Clennel, drawing his sword, and waving it threateningly over the head of the gipsy.

"Proud, cauld-hearted, and unfeeling mortal," said Elspeth, "will ye turn fellow-beings frae beneath your roof in a night like this, when the fox darna creep frae its hole, and the raven trembles on the tree?"

"Out! out! ye witch!" rejoined the laird.

"Fareweel, Clennel," said the Faa king; "we will leave your roof, and seek the shelter o' the hill-side. But ye shall rue! As I speak, man, ye shall rue it!"

"Rue it!" screamed Elspeth, rising—and her small dark eyes flashed with indignation—"he shall rue it—the bairn unborn shall rue it—and the bann o' Elspeth Faa shall be on Clennel and his kin, until his hearth be desolate, and his spirit howl within him like the tempest which this night rages in the heavens!"

The servants shrank together into a corner of the hall, to

avoid the rage of their master; and they shook the more at the threatening words of the weird woman, lest she should involve them in his doom; but he laughed with scorn at her words.

"Proud, pitiless fool," resumed Elspeth, more bitterly than before, "repress your scorn. Whom, think ye, ye treat wi' contempt? Ken ye not that the humble adder which ye tread upon can destroy ye—that the very wasp can sting ye, and there is poison in its sting! Ye laugh, but for your want o' humanity this night, sorrow shall turn your head grey, lang before age sit down upon your brow."

"Off! off! ye wretches!" added the laird; "vent your threats on the wind, if it will hear ye, for I regard them as little as it will. But keep out o' my way for the future, as ye would escape the honours o' a hempen cravat, and the hereditary exaltation o' your race."

Willie Faa made a sign to his followers, and without speaking they instantly rose and departed; but, as he himself reached the door, he turned round, and significantly striking the hilt of his dagger, exclaimed—

"Clennel! ye shall rue it!"

And the hoarse voice of Elspeth without, as the sound was borne away on the storm, was heard crying—"He shall rue it!" and repeating her imprecations.

Until now, poor Andrew Smith had lain groaning upon the floor more dead than alive, though not exactly "stone dead" as he expressed it; and ever, as he heard his master's angry voice, he groaned the more, until in his agony he doubted his existence. When, therefore, on the departure of the Faas, the laird dragged him to his feet, and feeling some pity for his terror, spoke to him more mildly, Andrew gazed vacantly around him, his teeth chattering together, and he first placed his hands upon his sides, to feel whether he was still indeed the identical flesh, blood, and bones, of Andrew Smith, or his disembodied spirit; and being assured that he was still a man, he put down his hand to feel for his chronometer, and again he groaned bitterly—and although he now knew he was not dead, he almost wished he were so. The other servants thought also of their money and their trinkets, which, as well as poor Andrew's chronometer, Elspeth, in the hurry in which she was rudely driven from the house, had, by a slip of memory, neglected to return to their lawful owners.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the laird's anger at his domestics, or farther to describe Andrew's agitation; but I may say that the laird was not wroth against the Faa gang without reason. They had committed ravages on his flocks—they had carried off the choicest of his oxen—they destroyed his deer—they plundered him of his poultry—and they even made free with the grain that he reared, and which he could spare least of all. But Willie Faa considered every landed proprietor as his enemy, and thought it his duty to quarter on them. Moreover, it was his boisterous laugh, as he pushed round the tankard, which aroused the laird from his slumbers, and broke Elspeth's spell. And the destruction of the charm, by the appearance of their master, before t' e had washed her hands in Darden Lough, caused those who had parted with their money and trinkets, to grieve for them the more, and to doubt the promises of the prophetess, or to

"Take all for gospel that the spae-folk say."

Many weeks, however, had not passed, until the laird of Clennel found that Elspeth the gipsy's threat, that he should "*rue it*," meant more than idle words. His cattle sickened and died in their stalls, or the choicest of them disappeared; his favourite horses were found maimed in the mornings, wounded and bleeding in the fields; and, notwithstanding the vigilance of his shepherds, the depredations on his flocks augmented tenfold He doubted not but that Willie Faa and his tribe were the authors of all the evils which were besetting him: but he knew also their power and their matchless craft, which rendered it almost impossible either to detect or punish them. He had a favourite steed, which had borne him in boyhood, and in battle when he served in foreign wars; and one morning when he went into his park, he found it lying bleeding upon the ground. Grief and indignation strove together in arousing revenge within his bosom. He ordered his sluthhound to be brought, and his dependants to be summoned together, and to bring arms with them. He had previously observed footprints on the ground, and he exclaimed—

"Now, the fiend take the Faas, they shall find whose turn it is to rue before the sun gae down."

The gong was pealed on the turrets of Clennel Hall, and the kempers with their poles bounded in every direction. with the fleetness of mountain stags, to summon all capabl of bearing arms to the presence of the laird. The mandate was readily obeyed; and within two hours thirty armed men appeared in the park. The sluthhound was led to the footprint; and after following it for many a weary mile over moss, moor, and mountain, it stood and howled, and lashed its lips with its tongue, and again ran as though its prey were at hand, as it approached what might be called a gap in the wilderness between Keyheugh and Clovencrag.

Now, in the space between these desolate crags, stood some score of peels, or rather half hovels, half encampments—and this primitive city in the wilderness was the capital of the Faa king's people.

"Now for vengeance!" exclaimed Clennel; and his desire of revenge was excited the more from perceiving several of the choicest of his cattle, which had disappeared, grazing before the doors or holes of the gipsy village.

"Bring whins and heather," he continued—"pile them around it, and burn the den of thieves to the ground."

His order was speedily obeyed, and when he commanded the trumpet to be sounded, that the inmates might defend themselves if they dared, only two or three men and women of extreme age, and some half-dozen children, crawled upon their hands and knees from the huts, (for it was impossible to stand upright in them.)

The aged men and women howled when they beheld the work of destruction that was in preparation, and the children screamed when they heard them howl. But the Laird of Clennel had been injured, and he turned a deaf ear to their misery. A light was struck, and a dozen torches applied at once. The whins crackled, the heather blazed, and the flames overtopped the hovels which they surrounded, and which within an hour became a heap of smouldering ashes.

Clennel and his dependants returned home, driving the cattle which had been stolen from him before them, and rejoicing in what they had done. On the following day, Willie Faa and a part of his tribe returned to the place of rendezvous—their city and home in the mountains—and they found it a heap of smoking ruins, and the old men and the old women of the tribe—their fathers and their mothers—sitting wailing upon the ruins, and warming over them their shivering limbs, while the children wept around them for food.

"Whose work is this?" inquired Willie, while anxiety and anger flashed in his eyes.

"The Laird o' Clennel!—the Laird o' Clennel!" answered every voice at the same instant.

"By this I swear!" exclaimed the king of the Faas, drawing his dagger from beneath his coat, "from this night henceforth he is laird nor man nae langer!" And he turned hastily from the ruins as if to put his threat in execution.

"Stay, ye madcap!" cried Elspeth, following him, "would ye fling away revenge for half a minute's satisfaction?"

"No, wife," cried he, "nae mair than I would sacrifice living a free and a fu' life for half an hour's hangin."

"Stop, then," returned she, "and let our vengeance fa upon him, so that it may wring his life away, drap by drap, until his heart be dry; and grief, shame, and sorrow, burn him up, as he has here burned house and home o' Elspeth Faa and her kindred."

"What mean ye, woman?" said Willie, hastily; "if I thought ye would come between me and my revenge, I would drive this bit steel through you wi as good will as I shall drive it through him."

"And ye shall be welcome," said Elspeth. She drew him aside, and whispered a few minutes in his ear. He listened attentively. At times he seemed to start, and at length, sheathing his dagg and grasping her hand, he exclaimed—"Excellent, Elspeth!—ye have it!—ye have it!"

At this period, the laird of Clennel was about thirty years of age, and two years before he had been married to Eleanor de Vere, a lady alike distinguished for her beauty and accomplishments. They had an infant son, who was the delight of his mother, and his father's pride. Now, for two years after the conflagration of their little town, Clennel heard nothing of his old enemies the Faas, neither did they molest him, nor had they been seen in the neighbourhood, and he rejoiced in having cleared his estate of such dangerous visiters. But the Faa king, listening to the advice of his wife, only "nursed his wrath to keep it warm," and retired from the neighbourhood, that he might accomplish, in its proper season, his design of vengeance more effectually, and with greater cruelty.

The infant heir of the house of Clennel had been named Henry, and he was about completing his third year—an age at which children are, perhaps, most interesting, and when their fondling and their prattling sink deepest into a parent's heart—for all is then beheld on childhood's sunny side, and all is innocence and love. Now, it was in a lovely day in April, when every bird had begun its annual song, and flowers were bursting into beauty, buds into leaves, and the earth resuming its green mantle, when Lady Clennel and her infant son, who then, as I have said, was about three years of age, went forth to enjoy the loveliness and the luxuries of nature, in the woods which surrounded their mansion, and Andrew Smith accompanied them as their guide and protector. They had proceeded somewhat more than a mile from the house, and the child, at intervals breaking away from them, sometimes ran before his mother, and at others sauntered behind her, pulling the wild flowers that strewed their path, when a man, springing from a dark thicket, seized the child in his arms, and again darted into the wood. Lady Clennel screamed aloud, and rushed after him. Andrew, who was coming dreaming behind, got but a glance of the ruffian stranger—but that glance was enough to reveal to him the tall, terrible figure of Willie Faa, the gipsy king.

There are moments when, and circumstances under which even cowards become courageous, and this was one of those moments and circumstances which suddenly inspired Andrew (who was naturally no hero) with courage. He, indeed, loved the child as though he had been his own; and, following the example of Lady Clennel, he drew his sword and rushed into the wood. He possessed considerable speed of foot, and he soon passed the wretched mother, and came in sight of the pursued. The unhappy lady, who ran panting and screaming as she rushed along, unable to keep pace with them, lost all trace of where the robber of her child had fled, and her cries of agony and bereavement rang through the woods.

Andrew, however, though he did not gain ground upon the gipsy, still kept within sight of him, and shouted to him as he ran, saying that all the dependants of Clennel would soon be on horseback at his heels, and trusting that every moment he would drop the child upon the ground. Still Faa flew forward, bearing the boy in his arm, and disregarding the cries and threats of his pursuer. He knew that Andrew's was not what could be called a heart of steel but he was aware that he had a powerful arm, and could use a sword as well as a better man; and he knew also that cowards will fight as desperately, when their life is at stake, as the brave.

The desperate chase continued for four hours, and till after the sun had set, and the gloaming was falling thick on the hills. Andrew, being younger and unencumbered, had at length gained ground upon the gipsy, and was within ten yards of him when he reached the Coquet side, about a mile below this town, at the hideous Thrumb, where the deep river, for many yards, rushes through a mere chasm in the rock. The Faa, with the child beneath his arm, leaped across the fearful gulf, and the dark flood gushed between him and his pursuer. He turned round, and, with a horrid laugh, looked towards Andrew and unsheathed his dagger. But even at this moment the unwonted courage of the chief servant of Clennel did not fail him, and as he rushed up and down upon one side of the gulf, that he might spring across and avoid the dagger of the gipsy, the other ran in like manner on the other side; and when Andrew stood as if ready to leap, the Faa king, pointing with his dagger to the dark flood that rolled between them, cried—

"See, fool! eternity divides us!"

"And for that bairn's sake, ye wretch, I'll brave it!" exclaimed Andrew, while his teeth gnashed together; and he stepped back, in order that he might spring across with the greater force and safety.

"Hold, man!" cried the Faa; "attempt to cross to me, and I will plunge this bonny heir o' Clennel into the flood below."

"Oh, gracious! gracious!" cried Andrew, and his resolution and courage forsook him; "ye monster!—ye barbarian!—oh, what shall I do now!"

"Go back whence you came," said the gipsy, "or follow me another step and the child dies."

"Oh, ye butcher!—ye murderer!" continued the other—and he tore his hair in agony—"hae ye nae mercy!"

"Sic mercy as your maister had," returned the Faa, "when he burned our dwellings about the ears o' the aged and infirm, and o' my helpless bairns! Ye shall find in me the mercy o' the fasting wolf, o' the tiger when it laps blood."

Andrew perceived that to rescue the child was now impossible, and with a heavy heart he returned to his master's house, in which there was no sound save that of lamentation.

For many weeks, yea months, the laird of Clennel, his friends, and his servants, sought anxiously throughout every part of the country to obtain tidings of his child, but their search was vain. It was long ere his lady was expected to recover the shock, and the affliction sat heavy on his soul, while in his misery he vowed revenge upon all of the gipsy race. But neither Willie Faa nor any of his tribe were again seen upon his estates, or heard of in their neighbourhood.

Four years were passed from the time that their son was stolen from them, and an infant daughter smiled upon the knee of Lady Clennel; and oft as it smiled on her face, and stretched its little hands towards her, she would burst into tears, as the smile and the infantine fondness of her little daughter reminded her of her lost Henry. They had had other children, but they had died while but a few weeks old.

For two years there had been a maiden in the household named Susan, and to her care, when the child was not in her own arms, Lady Clennel entrusted her infant daughter; for every one loved Susan, because of her affectionate nature and docile manners—she was, moreover, an orphan, and they pitied while they loved her. But one evening, when Lady Clennel desired that her daughter might be brought her,

in order that she might present her to a company who had come to visit them, (an excusable, though not always a pleasant vanity in mothers,) neither Susan nor the child were to be found. Wild fears seized the bosom of the already bereaved mother, and her husband felt his heart throb within him. They sought the woods, the hills, the cottages around; they wandered by the side of the rivers and the mountain burns, but no one had seen, no trace could be discovered of either the girl or the child.

I will not, because I cannot, describe the overwhelming misery of the afflicted parents. Lady Clennel spent her days in tears and her nights in dreams of her children, and her husband sank into a settled melancholy, while his hatred of the Faa race became more implacable, and he burst into frequent exclamations of vengeance against them.

More than fifteen years had passed, and though the poignancy of their grief had abated, yet their sadness was not removed, for they had been able to hear nothing that could throw light upon the fate of their children. About this period, sheep were again missed from the flocks, and, in one night, the hen-roosts were emptied. There needed no other proof that a Faa gang was again in the neighbourhood. Now, Northumberland at that period was still thickly covered with wood, and abounded with places where thieves might conceal themselves in security. Partly from a desire of vengeance, and partly from the hope of being able to extort from some of the tribe information respecting his children, Clennel armed his servants, and taking his hounds with him, set out in quest of the plunderers.

For two days their search was unsuccessful, but on the third the dogs raised their savage cry, and rushed into a thicket in a deep glen amongst the mountains. Clennel and his followers hurried forward, and in a few minutes perceived the fires of the Faa encampment. The hounds had already alarmed the vagrant colony, they had sprung upon many of them and torn their flesh with their tusks, but the Faas defended themselves against them with their poniards, and, before Clennel's approach, more than half his hounds lay dead upon the ground, and his enemies fled. Yet there was one poor girl amongst them, who had been attacked by a fierce hound, and whom no one attempted to rescue, as she strove to defend herself against it with her bare hands. Her screams for assistance rose louder and more loud; and as Clennel and his followers drew near, and her companions fled, they turned round, and, with a fiendish laugh, cried—

"Rue it now!"

Maddened more keenly by the words, he was following on in pursuit, without rescuing the screaming girl from the teeth of the hound, or seeming to perceive her, when a woman, suddenly turning round from amongst the flying gipsies, exclaimed—

"For your sake!—for Heaven's sake! Laird Clennel! save my bairn!"

He turned hastily aside, and, seizing the hound by the throat, he tore it from the lacerated girl, who sank, bleeding, terrified, and exhausted, upon the ground. Her features were beautiful, and her yellow hair contrasted ill with the tawny hue of her countenance, and the snowy whiteness of her bosom, which, in the struggle, had been revealed. The elder gipsy woman approached. She knelt by the side of the wounded girl.

"O my bairn!" she exclaimed, "what has this day brought upon me!—they have murdered you! This is rueing, indeed; and I rue too!"

"Susan!" exclaimed Clennel, as he listened to her words, and his eyes had been for several seconds fixed upon her countenance.

"Yes!—Susan!—guilty Susan!" cried the gipsy.

"Wretch!" he exclaimed, "my child!—where is my child—is *this*?"——and he gazed on the poor girl, his voice failed him, and he burst into tears.

"Yes!—yes!" replied she, bitterly, "it is her—there lies your daughter—look upon her face."

He needed indeed but to look upon her countenance—disfigured as it was, and dyed with weeds to give it a sallow hue—to behold in it every lineament of her mother's, lovely as when they first met his eye and entered his heart. He flung himself on the ground by her side, he raised her head, he kissed her cheek, he exclaimed, "My child!—my child!—my lost one!—I have destroyed thee!"

He bound up her lacerated arms, and applied a flask of wine, which he carried with him, to her lips, and he supported her on his knee, and again kissing her cheek, sobbed, "My child!—my own!"

Andrew Smith also bent over her and said, "Oh, it is her! there isna the smallest doubt o' that. I could swear to her among a thousand. She's her mother's very picture." And, turning to Susan, he added, "O Susan, woman, but ye had been a terrible hypocrite!"

Clennel having placed his daughter on horseback before him, supporting her with his arm, Susan was set between two of his followers, and conducted to the Hall.

Before the tidings were made known to Lady Clennel the wounds of her daughter were carefully dressed, the dye that disfigured the colour of her countenance was removed, and her gipsy garb was exchanged for more seemly apparel.

Clennel anxiously entered the apartment of his lady, to reveal to her the tale of joy; but when he entered, he wist not how to introduce it. He knew that excess of sudden joy was not less dangerous than excess of grief, and his countenance was troubled, though its expression was less sad than it had been for many years.

"Eleanor," he at length began, "cheer up."

"Why, I am not sadder than usual, dear," replied she, in her wonted gentle manner; "and to be more cheerful would ill become one who has endured my sorrows."

"True, true," said he, "but our affliction may not be so severe as we have thought—there may be hope—there may be joy for us yet."

"What mean ye, husband?" inquired she, eagerly; "have ye heard aught—aught of my children?—you have!—you have!—your countenance speaks it."

"Yes, dear Eleanor," returned he, "I have heard of our daughter."

"And she lives?—she lives?—tell me that she lives!"

"Yes, she lives."

"And I shall see her—I shall embrace my child again?"

"Yes, love, yes," replied he, and burst into tears.

"When—oh, when?" she exclaimed, "can you take me to her now."

"Be calm, my sweet one. You shall see our child—our long lost child. You shall see her now—she is here."

"Here!—my child!" she exclaimed, and sank back upon her seat.

Words would fail to paint the tender interview—the mother's joy—the daughter's wonder—the long, the passionate embrace—the tears of all—the looks—the words—the moments of unutterable feeling.

I shall next notice the confession of Susan. Clennel promised her forgiveness if she would confess the whole truth; and he doubted not that from her he would also obtain tidings of his son, and learn where he might find him, if he yet lived. I shall give her story in her own words.

"When I came amongst you," she began, "I said that I was an orphan, and I told ye truly, so far as I knew myself. I have been reared amongst the people ye call gipsies from infancy. They fed me before I could provide for myself. I have wandered with them through many lands. They taught me many things; and, while young, sent me as a servant into families, that I might gather information to assist them in upholding their mysteries of fortune-telling. I dared not to disobey them—they kept me as their slave—and I knew that

they would destroy my life for an act of disobedience. I was in London when ye cruelly burned down the bit town between the Keyheugh and Clovencrag. That night would have been your last, but Elspeth Faa vowed more cruel vengeance than death on you and yours. After our king had carried away your son, I was ordered from London to assist in the plot o' revenge. I at length succeeded in getting into your family, and the rest ye know. When ye were a' busy wi' your company, I slipped into the woods wi' the bairn in my arms, where others were ready to meet us; and long before ye missed us, we were miles across the hills, and frae that day to this your daughter has passed as mine."

"But tell me all, woman," cried Clennel, "as you hope for either pardon or protection—where is my son, my little Harry?—does he live?—where shall I find him?"

"As I live," replied Susan, "I cannot tell. There are but two know concerning him—and that is the king and his wife Elspeth; and there is but one way of discovering any thing respecting him, which is by crossing Elspeth's loof, that she may betray her husband; and she would do it for revenge's sake, for an ill husband has he been to her, and in her old days he has discarded her for another."

"And where may she be found?" inquired Clennel, earnestly.

"That," added Susan, "is a question I cannot answer. She was with the people in the glen to day, and was first to raise the laugh when your dog fastened its teeth in the flesh of your ain bairn. But she may be far to seek and ill to find now—for she is wi' those that travel fast and far, and that will not see her hindmost."

Deep was the disappointment of the laird when he found he could obtain no tidings of his son. But, at the intercession of his daughter, (whose untutored mind her fond mother had begun to instruct,) Susan was freely pardoned, promised protection from her tribe, and again admitted as one of the household.

I might describe the anxious care of the fond mother, as, day by day, she sat by her new-found and lovely daughter's side, teaching her, and telling her of a hundred things of which she had never heard before, while her father sat gazing and listening near them, rejoicing over both.

But the ray of sunshine which had penetrated the house of Clennel, was not destined to be of long duration. At that period, a fearful cloud overhung the whole land, and the fury of civil war seemed about to burst forth.

The threatening storm did explode; a bigoted king overstepped his prerogative, set at naught the rights and the liberties of the subject, and an indignant people stained their hands with blood. A political convulsion shook the empire to its centre. Families and individuals became involved in the general catastrophe; and the house of Clennel did not escape. In common with the majority of the English gentry of that period, Clennel was a stanch loyalist, and if not exactly a lover of the king, or an ardent admirer of his acts, yet one who would fight for the crown though it should (as it was expressed about the time) "hang by a bush." When, therefore, the parliament declared war against the king, and the name of Cromwell spread awe throughout the country, and when some said that a prophet and deliverer had risen amongst them, and others an ambitious hypocrite and a tyrant, Clennel armed a body of his dependants, and hastened to the assistance of the sovereign, leaving his wife and his newly-found daughter with the promise of a speedy return.

It is unnecessary to describe all that he did or encountered during the civil wars. He had been a zealous partizan of the first Charles, and he fought for the fortunes of his son to the last. He was present at the battle of Worcester, which Cromwell calls his "crowning mercy," in the September of 1651, where the already dispirited royalists were finally routed; and he fought by the side of the king until the streets were heaped with dead; and when Charles fled, he, with others, accompanied him to the Borders of Staffordshire.

Having bid the young prince an affectionate farewell, Clennel turned back, with the intention of proceeding on his journey, on the following day, to Northumberland, though he was aware that, from the part which he had taken in the royal cause, even his person was in danger. Yet the desire again to behold his wife and daughter, overcame his fears, and the thought of meeting them in some degree consoled him for the fate of his prince, and the result of the struggle in which he had been engaged.

But he had not proceeded far, when he was met by two men dressed as soldiers of the Parliamentary army—the one a veteran with grey hairs, and the other a youth. The shades of night had set in; but the latter he instantly recognised as a young soldier whom he had that day wounded in the streets of Worcester.

"Stand!" said the old man, as they met him; and the younger drew his sword.

"If I stand!" exclaimed Clennel, "it shall not be when an old man and a boy command me." And, following their example, he unsheathed his sword.

"Boy!" exclaimed the youth; "whom call ye boy?—think ye, because ye wounded me this morn, that fortune shall aye sit on your arm?—yield or try."

They made several thrusts at each other, and the old man, as an indifferent spectator, stood looking on. But the youth, by a dexterous blow, shivered the sword in Clennel's hand, and left him at his mercy.

"Now yield ye," he exclaimed; "the chance is mine now—in the morning it was thine."

"Ye seem a fair foe," replied Clennel, "and loath am I to yield, but that I am weaponless."

"Despatch him at once!" growled the old man. "If he spilled your blood in the morning, there can be nae harm in spilling his the night—and especially after giein' him a fair chance."

"Father," returned the youth, "would ye have me to kill a man in cold blood?"

"Let him submit to be bound then, hands and eyes, or I will," cried the senior.

The younger obeyed, and Clennel, finding himself disarmed, submitted to his fate; and his hands were bound, and his eyes tied up, so that he knew not where they led him.

After wandering many miles, and having lain upon what appeared the cold earth for a lodging, he was aroused from a comfortless and troubled sleep, by a person tearing the bandage from his eyes, and ordering him to prepare for his trial. He started to his feet. He looked around, and beheld that he stood in the midst of a gipsy encampment. He was not a man given to fear, but a sickness came over his heart when he thought of his wife and daughter, and that, knowing the character of the people in whose power he was, he should never behold them again.

The males of the Faa tribe began to assemble in a sort of half circle in the area of the encampment, and in the midst of them, towering over the heads of all, he immediately distinguished the tall figure of Willie Faa, in whom he also discovered the grey-haired Parliamentary soldier of the previous night. But the youth with whom he had twice contended and once wounded, and by whom he had been made prisoner, he was unable to single out amongst them.

He was rudely dragged before them, and Willie Faa cried—

"Ken ye the culprit?"

"Clennel o' Northumberland!—our enemy!" exclaimed twenty voices.

"Yes," continued Willie, "Clennel our enemy—the burner o' our humble habitations—that left the auld, the sick, the infirm, and the helpless, and the infants o' our kindred, to perish in the flaming ruins. Had we burned his

house, the punishment would have been death; and shall we do less to him than he would do to us?"

"No! no!" they exclaimed with one voice.

"But," added Willie, "though he would have disgraced us wi' a gallows, as he has been a soldier, I propose that he hae the honour o' a soldier's death, and that Harry Faa be appointed to shoot him."

"All! all! all!" was the cry.

"He shall die with the setting sun," said Willie, and again they cried, "Agreed!"

Such was the form of trial which Clennel underwent, when he was again rudely dragged away, and placed in a tent round which four strong Faas kept guard. He had not been alone an hour, when his judge, the Faa king, entered, and addressed him—

"Now, Laird Clennel, say ye that I haena lived to see day about wi' ye. When ye turned me frae beneath your roof, when the drift was fierce and the wind howled in the moors, was it not tauld to ye that *ye would rue it!*—but ye mocked the admonition and the threat, and, after that, cruelly burned us out o' house and ha'. When I came hame, I saw my auld mother, that was within three years o' a hunder, couring owre the reeking ruins, without a wa' to shelter her, and crooning curses on the doer o' the black deed. There were my youngest bairns, too, crouching by their granny's side, starving wi' hunger as weel as wi' cauld, for ye had burned a', and haudin' their bits o' hands before the burnin' ruins o' the house that they were born in, to warm them! That night I vowed vengeance on you; and even on that night I would have executed it, but I was prevented; and glad am I now that I was prevented, for my vengeance has been complete—or a' but complete. Wi' my ain hand I snatched your son and heir from his mother's side, and a terrible chase I had for it; but revenge lent me baith strength and speed. And when ye had anither bairn that was like to live, I forced a lassie, that some o' our folk had stolen when an infant, to bring it to us. Ye have got your daughter back again, but no before she has cost ye mony a sad heart and mony a saut tear; and that was some revenge. But the substance o' my satisfaction and revenge lies in what I hae to tell ye. Ye die this night as the sun gaes down; and, hearken to me now—the young soldier whom ye wounded on the streets o' Worcester, and who last night made you prisoner, was your son—your heir—your lost son! Ha! ha!—Clennel, am I revenged?"

"My son!" screamed the prisoner—"monster, what is it that ye say? Strike me dead, now I am in your power—but torment me not!"

"Ha! ha! ha!" again laughed the grey-haired savage—"man, ye are about to die, and ye know not ye are born. Ye have not heard half I have to tell. I heard that ye had joined the standard of King Charles. I, a king in my own right, care for neither your king nor parliament; but I resolved to wear, for a time, the cloth of old Noll, and of making your son do the same, that I might have an opportunity of meeting you as an enemy, and seeing *him* strike you to the heart. That satisfaction I had not; but I had its equivalent. Yesterday, I saw you shed his blood on the streets of Worcester, and in the evening he gave you a prisoner into my hands, that desired you."

"Grey-haired monster!" exclaimed Clennel, "have ye no feeling—no heart? Speak ye to torment me, or tell me truly have I seen my son?"

"Patience, man!" said the Faa, with a smile of Sardonic triumph—"my story is but half finished. It was the blood of your son ye shed yesterday at Worcester—it was your son who disarmed ye and gave ye into my power; and, best of all!—now, hear me! hear me! lose not a word!—it is the hand of your son that this night, at sunset, shall send you to eternity! Now, tell me, Clennel, am I not revenged? Do ye not rue it?"

"Wretch? wretch!" cried the miserable parent, "in mercy strike me dead. If I have raised my sword against my son, let that suffice ye!—but spare, oh, spare my child from being an involuntary parricide!"

"Hush, fool!" said the Faa; "I have waited for this consummation of my revenge for twenty years, and think ye that I will be deprived of it now by a few whining words? Remember sunset!" he added, and left the tent.

Evening came, and the disk of the sun began to disappear behind the western hills. Men and women, the old and the young, amongst the Faas, came out from their encampment to behold the death of their enemy. Clennel was brought forth between two, his hands fastened to his sides, and a bandage round his mouth, to prevent him making himself known to his executioner. A rope was also brought round his body, and he was tied to the trunk of an old ash tree. The women of the tribe began a sort of yell or coronach; and their king, stepping forward, and smiling savagely in the face of his victim, cried aloud—

"Harry Faa! stand forth and perform the duty your tribe have imposed on you."

A young man reluctantly, and with a slow and trembling step, issued from one of the tents. He carried a musket in his hand, and placed himself in front of the prisoner, at about twenty yards from him.

"Make ready!" cried Willie Faa, in a voice like thunder. And the youth, though his hands shook, levelled the musket at his victim.

But, at that moment, one who, to appearance, seemed a maniac, sprang from a clump of whins behind the ash tree where the prisoner was bound, and, throwing herself before him, she cried—

"Hold!—would you murder your own father! Harry Clennel!—would ye murder your father!—Mind ye not when ye was stolen frae your mother's side, as ye gathered wild flowers in the wood?"

It was Elspeth Faa.

The musket dropped from the hands of the intended executioner—a thousand recollections, that he had often fancied dreams, rushed across his memory. He again seized the musket, he rushed forward to his father, but, ere he reached Elspeth had cut the cords that bound him, and placed a dagger in his hand for his defence, and, with extended arms, he flew to meet him, crying—"My son!—my son!"

The old Faa king shook with rage and disappointment, and his first impulse was to poniard his wife—but he feared to do so; for although he had injured her, and had not seen her for years, her influence was greater with the tribe than his.

"Now, Willie," cried she, addressing him, "wha rues it now?—Fareweel for ance and a'—and the bairn I brought up will find a shelter for my auld head."

It were vain to tell how Clennel and his son wept on each other's neck, and how they exchanged forgiveness. But such was the influence of Elspeth, that they departed from the midst of the Faas unmolested, and she accompanied them.

Imagination must picture the scene when the long lost son flung himself upon the bosom of his mother, and pressed his sister's hand in his. Clennel Hall rang with the sounds of joy for many days; and, ere they were ended, Andrew Smith placed a ring upon the finger of Susan, and they became one flesh—she a respectable woman. And old Elspeth lived to the age of ninety and seven years beneath its roof.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE SOLITARY OF THE CAVE.

On the banks of the Tweed, and about half a mile above where the Whitadder flows into it on the opposite side, there is a small and singular cave. It is evidently not an excavation formed by nature, but the work of man's hands. To the best of my recollection, it is about ten feet square, and in the midst of it is a pillar or column, hewn out of the solid rock, and reaching from the floor to the roof. It is an apartment cut out of the solid rock, and must have been a work of great labour. In the neighbourhood, it is generally known by the name of the King's Cove, and the tradition runs, that it was once the hiding-place of a Scottish king. Formerly, it was ascended from the level of the water by a flight of steps, also hewn out of the rock; but the mouldering touch of time, the storms of winter, and the undermining action of the river, which continually appears to press southward, (as though nature aided in enlarging the Scottish boundary,) has long since swept them away, though part of them were entire within the memory of living men. What king used it as a hiding-place, tradition sayeth not: but it also whispers that it was used for a like purpose by the "great patriot hero," Sir William Wallace. These things may have been; but certainly it never was formed to be a mere place of concealment for a king, though such is the popular belief. Immediately above the bank where it is situated, are the remains of a Roman camp; and it is more than probable that the cave is coeval with the camp, and may have been used for religious purposes—or, perchance, as a prison.

But our story has reference to more modern times. Almost ninety years have fallen as drops into the vast ocean of eternity, since a strange and solitary man took up his residence in the cave. He appeared a melancholy being—he was seldom seen, and there were few with whom he would hold converse. How he lived no one could tell, nor would he permit any one to approach his singular habitation. It was generally supposed that he had been "out," as the phrase went, with Prince Charles, who, after being hunted as a wild beast upon the mountains, escaped to France only a few months before the appearance of the Solitary on Tweedside. This, however, was merely a conjecture. The history and character of the stranger were a mystery; and the more ignorant of the people believed him to be a wizard or wicked man, who, while he avoided all manner of intercourse with his fellow-mortals, had power over and was familiar with the spirits of the air; for, at that period, the idle belief in witchcraft was still general. His garments were as singular as his habits, and a large coarse cloak or coat, of a brown colour, fastened around him with a leathern girdle, covered his person; while on his head he wore a long, conical cap, composed of fox-skins, somewhat resembling those worn now-a-days by some of our regiments of dragoons. His beard, which was black, was also permitted to grow. But there was a dignity in his step, as he was occasionally observed walking upon the banks over his hermitage, and an expression of pride upon his countenance and in the glance of his eyes, which spoke him to have been a person of some note.

For three years he continued the inhabitant of the cave; and, throughout that period, he permitted no one to enter it. But, on its appearing to be deserted for several days, some fishermen, apprehending that the recluse might be dying, or perchance dead, within it, ascended the flight of steps, and, removing a rude door which merely rested against the rock and blocked up the aperture, they perceived that the cave was tenantless. On the farther side of the pillar, two boards slightly raised as an inclined plane, and covered with dried rushes, marked what had been the bed of the Solitary. A low stool, a small and rude table, with two or three simple cooking utensils, completed the furniture of the apartment. The fishermen were about to withdraw, when one of them picked up a small parcel of manuscripts near the door of the cave, as though the hermit had dropped them by accident at his departure. They appeared to be intended as letters to a friend, and were entitled—

"MY HISTORY."

'Dear Lewis, (they began,) when death shall have sealed up the eyes, and perchance some stranger dug a grave for your early friend, Edward Fleming, then the words which he now writes for your perusal may meet your eye. You believe me dead—and would to Heaven that I had died, ere my hands became red with guilt, and my conscience a living fire which preys upon and tortures me, but will not consume me! You remember—for you were with me—the first time I met Catherine Forrester. It was when her father invited us to his house in Nithsdale, and our hearts, like the season, were young. She came upon my eyes as a dream of beauty, a being more of heaven than of earth. You, Lewis, must admit that she was all that fancy can paint of loveliness. Her face, her form, her auburn ringlets, falling over a neck of alabaster!—where might man find their equal? She became the sole object of my waking thoughts, the vision that haunted my sleep. And was she not good as beautiful? Oh! the glance of her eyes was mild as a summer morning breaking on the earth, when the first rays of the sun shoot like streaks of gold across the sea. Her smile, too—you cannot have forgotten its sweetness! Never did I behold it, but I thought an angel was in my presence, shedding influence over me. There was a soul, too, in every word she uttered. Affectation she had none; but the outpourings of her mind flowed forth as a river, and her wit played like the ripple which the gentle breeze makes to sport upon its bosom. You may think that I am about to write you a maudlin tale of love, such as would draw tears from a maiden in her teens, while those of more sober age turned away from it, and cried—'Pshaw!' But fear not—there is more of misery and madness than of love in my history. And yet, why should we turn with affected disgust from a tale of the heart's first, best, purest, and dearest affections? It is affectation, Lewis—the affectation of a cynic,

who cries out, 'vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' when the delicacy of young affection has perished in his own breast. Who is there bearing the human form that looks not back upon those days of tenderness and bliss, with a feeling akin to that which our first parents might have experienced, when they looked back upon the Eden from which they had been expelled? Whatever may be your feelings, forgive me, while, for a few moments, I indulge in the remembrance of this one bright spot in my history, even although you are already in part acquainted with it.

We had been inmates beneath the roof of Sir William Forrester for somewhat more than two months, waiting to receive intelligence respecting the designs of his Excellency, or the landing of the Prince. It was during the Easter holidays, and you had gone to Edinburgh for a few days, to ascertain the feelings and the preparations of the friends of the cause there. I remained almost forgetful of our errand, dreaming beneath the eyes of Catherine. It was on the second day after your departure, Sir William sat brooding over the possible results of the contemplated expedition, now speaking of the feeling of the people, the power of the house of Hanover, the resources of Prince Charles, and the extent of the assistance he was likely to receive from France—drowning, at the same time, every desponding thought that arose in an additional glass of claret, and calling on me to follow his example. But my thoughts were of other matters. Catherine sat beside me, arranging Easter gifts for the poor; and I, though awkwardly, attempted to assist her. Twilight was drawing on, and the day was stormy for the season, for the snow fell, and the wind whirled round the drift in fantastic columns; but with us, the fire blazed blithely, mingling its light with the fading day, and though the storm raged without, and Sir William seemed ready to sink into melancholy, I was happy—more than happy. But attend, Lewis, for I never told you this; at the very moment when my happiness seemed tranquil as the rays of a summer moon at midnight, showering them on a mountain, and casting its deep, silent shadow on a lake, as though it revealed beneath the waters, a bronzed and a silent world, the trampling of a horse's feet was heard at the gate. I looked towards the narrow window. A blackish-brown, shaggy animal attempted to trot towards the door. It had rough hanging ears, a round form, and hollow back; and a tall lathy-looking figure, dismounting from it, gave the bridle to Sir William's groom, and uttered his orders respecting it, notwithstanding of the storm, with the slowness and solemnity of a judge. And, fearful that, although so delivered, they might not be obeyed to the letter—

'A merciful man regardeth the life of his beast,' said he, and stalked to the stable behind them.

'There go a brace of originals,' thought I; and, with difficulty, I suppressed a laugh.

But Catherine smiled not, and her father left the room to welcome the visitant.

The tall, thin man now entered. I call him tall, for his stature exceeded six feet; and I say thin, for nature had been abundantly liberal with bones and muscle, but wofully niggard in clothing them with flesh. His limbs, however, were lengthy enough for a giant of seven feet; and it would be difficult for me to say, whether his swinging arms, which seemed suspended from his shoulders, appeared more of use or of incumbrance. His countenance was a thoughtful blank, if you will allow me such an expression. He had large, grey, fixture-like, unmeaning eyes; and his hair was carefully combed back and plaited behind, to show his brow to the best advantage. He gave two familiar stalks across the floor, and he either did not see me, or he cared not for seeing me.

'A good Easter to ye, Catherine, my love!' said he. 'Still employed wi' works o' love an' charity? How have ye been, dear?' And he lifted her fair hand to his long blue ilps.

Catherine was silent—she became pale, deadly pale. I believe her hand grew cold at his touch, and that she would have looked to me; but she could not—she dared not. *Something forbade it.* But with me the spell was broken—the chain that bound me to her father's house, that withheld me from accompanying you to Edinburgh, was revealed. The uncouth stranger tore the veil from my eyes—he shewed me my first glance of love in the mirror of jealousy. My teeth grated together—my eyes flashed—drops of sweat stood upon my forehead. My first impulse was to dash the intruder to the ground; but, to hide my feelings, I rose from my seat, and was about to leave the room.

'Sir, I ask your pardon,' said he—'I did not observe that ye was a stranger; but that accounts for the uncommon dryness o' my Katie. Yet, sir, ye mustna think that, though she is as modest as a bit daisy peeping out frae beneath a clod to get a blink o' the sun, but that we can hae our ain crack by our twa sels for a' that.'

'Sir Peter Blakely,' said Catherine, rising with a look expressive of indignation and confusion, 'what mean ye?'

'Oh, no offence, Miss Catherine—none in the world,' he was beginning to say, when, fortunately, her father entered, as I found that I had advanced a step towards the stranger, with I scarce know what intention; but it was not friendly.

'Sir Peter,' said Sir William, 'allow me to introduce you to my young friend, Mr Fleming; he is *one of us*—a supporter of the good cause.'

He introduced me in like manner. I bowed—trembled—bowed again.

'I am very happy to see you, Mr Fleming,' said Sir Peter—'very happy, indeed.' And he stretched out his huge collection of fingers to shake hands with me.

My eyes glared on his, and I felt them burn as I gazed on him. He evidently quailed, and would have stepped back; but I grasped his hand, and scarce knowing what I did, I grasped it as though a vice had held it. The blood sprang to his thin fingers, and his glazed orbs started farther from their sockets.

'Save us a'! friend! friend! Mr Fleming! or what do they ca' ye?' he exclaimed in agony; 'is that the way ye shake hands in your country? I would hae ye to mind my fingers arena made o' cauld iron.'

The cold and the snow had done half the work with his fingers before, and the grasp I gave them squeezed them into torture; and he stood shaking and rattling them in the air, applying them to his lips and again to the fire, and finally, dancing round the room, swinging his tormented hand, and exclaiming—

'Sorrow take ye! for I dinna ken whether my fingers be off or on!'

Sir William strove to assure him it was merely the effect of cold, and that I could not intend to injure him, while, with difficulty, he kept gravity at the grotesque contortions and stupendous strides of his intended son-in-law. Even Catherine's countenance relaxed into a languid smile, and I, in spite of my feelings, laughed outright, while the object of our amusement at once wept and laughed to keep us company.

You will remember that I slept in an apartment separated only by a thin partition from the breakfast parlour. In the partition which divided my chamber from the parlour was a door that led to it, one half of which was of glass, and in the form of a window, and over the glass fell a piece of drapery. It was not the door by which I passed from or entered my sleeping room, but through the drapery I could discover (if so minded) whatever took place in the adjoining apartment.

Throughout the night I had not retired to rest; my soul was filled with anxious and uneasy thoughts; and they chased

sleep from me. I felt how deeply, shall I say how madly, I loved my Catherine; and, in Sir Peter Blakely, I beheld a rival who had forestalled me in soliciting her hand; and I hated him. My spirit was exhausted with its own bitter and conflicting feelings; and I sat down as a man over whom agony of soul has brought a stupor, with my eyes vacantly fixed upon the curtain which screened me from the breakfast parlour. Sir Peter entered it, and the sound of his footsteps broke my reverie. I could perceive him approach the fire, draw forward a chair, and place his feet on each side of the grate. He took out his tobacco-box, and began to enjoy the comforts of his morning pipe in front of a 'green fire;' shivering—for the morning was cold—and edging forward his chair, until his knees almost came in conjunction with the mantelpiece. His pipe was finished, and he was preparing to fill it a second time. He struck it over his finger, to shake out the dust which remained after his last whiff; he struck it a second time, (he had been half dreaming, like myself,) and it broke in two and fell among his feet. He was left without a companion. He arose and began to walk across the room; his countenance bespoke anxiety and restlessness. I heard him mutter the words—

'I will marry her!—yea, I will!—my sweet Catherine!'

Every muttered word he uttered was a dagger driven into my bosom. At that moment, Sir William entered the parlour.

'Sir,' said Sir Peter, after their morning salutations, 'I ave been thinking it is a long way for me to come over from Roxburgh to here'—and he paused, took out his snuff-box, opened the lid, and added—'Yes, sir, it is a long way'—he took a pinch of snuff, and continued—'Now, Sir William, I have been thinking that it would be as well, indeed a great deal better, for you to come over to my lodge at a time like this.' Here he paused, and placed the snuff-box in his pocket.

'I can appreciate your kind intentions,' said Sir William, 'but'——

'There can be no *buts* about it,' returned the other—'I perceive ye dinna understand me, Sir William. What I mean is this'—but here he seemed at a loss to explain his meaning; and, after standing with a look of confusion for a few moments, he took out his tobacco-box, and added—'I would thank you, sir, to order me a pipe.' The pipe was brought—he put it in the fire, and added—'I have been thinking, Sir William, very seriously have I been thinking, on a change of life. I am no great bairn in the world now; and, I am sure, sir, none knows better than you, (who for ten years was my guardian,) that I never had such a degree of thoughtlessness about me as to render it possible to suppose that I would make a bad husband to any woman that was disposed to be happy.' Once more he became silent, and taking his pipe from the fire, after a few thoughtful whiffs, he resumed—'Servants will have their own way without a mistress owre them; and I am sure it would be a pity to see onything going wrong about my place, for everybody will say, that has seen it, that the sun doesna wauken the birds to throw the soul of music owre a lovelier spot, in a' his journey round the globe. Now, Sir William,' he added, 'it is needless for me to say it, for every person within twenty miles round is aware that I am just as fond o' Miss Catherine as the laverock is o' the blue lift; and it is equally sure and evident to me, that she cares for naebody but mysel.'

Lewis! imagine my feelings when I heard him utter this! There was a word that I may not write, which filled my soul, and almost burst from my tongue. I felt agony and indignation burn over my face. Again, I heard him add—'When I was over in the middle o' harvest last, ye remember that, in your presence, I put the question fairly to her; and, although she hung down her head and said nothing, yet that, sir, in my opinion, is just the way a virtuous woman ought to consent. I conceive that it shewed true affection, and sterling modesty; and, sir, what I am now thinking is this—Catherine is very little short of one and twenty, and I, not so young as I have been, am every day drawing nearer to my sere and yellow leaf; and I conceive it would be great foolishness—ye will think so yourself—to be putting off time.'

'My worthy friend,' said Sir William, 'you are aware that the union you speak of is one from which my consent has never been withheld; and I am conscious that, in complying with your wishes, I shall bestow my daughter's hand upon one whose heart is as worthy of her affections as his actions and principles are of her esteem.'

Sir Peter gave a skip (if I may call a stride of eight feet by such a name) across the room, he threw the pipe in the grate, and, seizing the hand of Sir William, exclaimed—

> 'Oh, joy supreme! oh, bliss beyond compare!
> My cup runs owre—Heaven's bounty can nae mair!'

'Excuse the quotation from a profane author,' he added, 'upon such a solemn occasion; but he expresses exactly my feelings at this moment; for, oh, could you feel what I feel here!'—And he laid his hand upon his breast. 'Whatever be my faults, whatever my weakness, I am strong in gratitude.'

You will despise me for having played the part of a mean listener. Be it so, Lewis—I despise, I hate myself. I heard it proposed that the wedding-day should take place within a month: but the consent of Catherine was not yet obtained. I perceived her enter the apartment; I witnessed her agony when her father communicated to her the proposal of his friend, and his wish that it should be agreed to. Shall I tell it you, my friend, that the agony I perceived on her countenance kindled a glow of joy upon mine? Yes, I rejoiced in it, for it filled my soul with hope, it raised my heart as from the grave.

Two days after this, and I wandered forth among the woods, to nourish hope in solitude. Every trace of the recent storm had passed away, the young buds were wooing the sunbeams, and the viewless cuckoo lifted up its voice from afar. All that fell upon the ear, and all that met the eye, contributed to melt the soul to tenderness. My thoughts were of Catherine, and I now thought how I should unbosom before her my whole heart; or, I fancied her by my side, her fair face beaming smiles on mine, her lips whispering music. My spirit became entranced—it was filled with her image. With my arms folded upon my bosom, I was wandering thus unconsciously along a footpath in the wood, when I was aroused by the exclamation—

'Edward!'

It was my Catherine. I started as though a disembodied spirit had met me on my path. Her agitation was not less than mine. I stepped forward—I would have clasped her to my bosom—but resolution forsook me—her presence awed me—I hesitated and faltered—

'*Miss* Forrester!'

I had never called her by any other name; but, as she afterwards told me, the word then went to her heart, and she thought, 'He cares not for me, and I am lost!' Would to Heaven that such had ever remained her thoughts, and your friend would have been less guilty and less wretched than he this day is!

I offered her my arm, and we walked onward together; but we spoke not to each other—we could not speak. Each had a thousand things to say, but they were all unutterable. A stifled sigh escaped from her bosom, and mine responded to it. We had approached within a quarter of a mile of her father's house. Still we were both silent. I trembled—I stood suddenly still.

'Catherine!' I exclaimed, and my eyes remained fixed upon the ground—my bosom laboured in agony—I struggled for words, and, at length, added, 'I cannot return to your father's—Catherine, I cannot!'

'Edward!' she cried, 'whither—whither would you go?—you would not leave me thus? What means this?'

'Means! Catherine! returned I—'are ye not to be another's? Would that I had died before I had looked upon thy face, and my soul was lighted with a fleeting joy, only that the midnight of misery might sit down on it for ever!'

'Oh, speak not thus!' she cried, and her gentle form shook as a blighted leaf in an autumnal breeze; 'speak not language unfit for you to utter or me to hear. Come, *dear* Edward!'

'*Dear* Edward!' I exclaimed, and my arms fell upon her neck—'that word has recalled me to myself! *Dear* Edward!—repeat those words again!—let the night-breeze whisper them, and bear them on its wings for ever! Tell me, Catherine, am I indeed *dear* to you?'

She burst into tears, and hid her face upon my bosom.

'Edward she sobbed, 'let us leave this place—I have said too much—let us return home.'

'No, loved one!' resumed I; 'if you have said too much, we part now, and eternity may not unite us! Farewell, Catherine!—be happy! Bear my thanks to your father, and say—but, no, no!—say nothing—let not the wretch he has honoured with his friendship blast his declining years! Farewell, love!' I pressed my lips upon her snowy brow, and again I cried—'Farewell!'

'You must not—shall not leave me!' she said, and trembled; while her fair hands grasped my arm.

'Catherine,' added I, 'can I see you another's? The thought chokes me! Would you have me behold it?—shall my eyes be withered by the sight? Never, never! Forgive me!—Catherine, forgive me! I have acted rashly, perhaps cruelly; but I would not have spoken as I have done—I would have fled from your presence—I would not have given one pang to your gentle bosom—your father should not have said that he sheltered a scorpion that turned and stung him; but, meeting you as I have done to-day, I could no longer suppress the tumultuous feelings that struggled in my bosom. But it is past. Forgive me—forget me!'

Still memory hears her sighs, as her tears fell upon my bosom, and, wringing her hands in bitterness, she cried—

'Say not, *forget* you! If, in compliance with my father's will, I must give my hand to another, and if to him my vows must be plighted, I will keep them sacred—yet my heart is yours!'

Lewis! I was delirious with joy, as I listened to this confession from her lips. The ecstasy of years was compressed into a moment of deep, speechless, almost painful luxury. We mingled our tears together, and our vows went up to heaven a sacrifice pure as the first that ascended, when the young earth offered up its incense from paradise to the new-born sun.

I remained beneath her father's roof until within three days of the time fixed for her becoming the bride of Sir Peter Blakely. Day by day, I beheld my Catherine move to and fro like a walking corpse—pale, speechless, her eyes fixed and lacking their lustre. Even I seemed unnoticed by her. She neither sighed nor wept. A trance had come over her faculties. She made no arrangements for her bridal; and when I at times whispered to her that *she should be mine!* O Lewis! she would then smile—but it was a smile where the light of the soul was not—more dismal, more vacant than the laugh of idiotcy! Think, then, how unlike they were to the rainbows of the soul which I had seen radiate the countenance of my Catherine!

Sir Peter Blakely had gone into Roxburghshire, to make preparations for taking home his bride, and her father had joined you in Edinburgh, relative to the affairs of Prince Charles, in consequence of a letter which he had received from you, and the contents of which might not even be communicated to me. At any other time, and this lack of confidence would have provoked my resentment; but my thoughts were then of other things, and I heeded it not. Catherine and I were ever together; and for hour succeeding hour we sat silent, gazing on each other. O my friend! could your imagination conjure up our feelings and our thoughts in this hour of trial, you would start, shudder, and think no more. The glance of each was as a pestilence, consuming the other. As the period of her father's return approached, a thousand resolutions crowded within my bosom—some of magnanimity, some of rashness. But I was a coward—morally, I was a coward. Though I feared not the drawn sword nor the field of danger more than another man, yet misery compels me to confess what I was. Every hour, every moment, the sacrifice of parting from her became more painful. Oh! a mother might have torn her infant from her breast, dashed it on the earth, trampled on its outstretched hands, and laughed at its dying screams, rather than that I now could have lived to behold my Catherine another's.

Suddenly, the long, the melancholy charm of my silence broke. I fell upon my knee, and, clenching my hands together, exclaimed—

'Gracious Heaven!—if I be within the pale of thy mercy, spare me this sight! Let me be crushed as an atom—but let not mine eyes see the day when a tongue speaks it, nor mine ears hear the sound that calls her another's.'

I started to my feet, I grasped her hands in frenzy, I exclaimed—'You *shall* be mine!' I took her hand. 'Catherine!' I added, 'you will not—you SHALL not give your hand to another! It is mine, and from mine it shall not part!' And I pressed it to my breast as a mother would her child from the knife of a destroyer.

'It SHALL be yours!' she replied wildly; and the feeling of life and consciousness again gushed through her heart. But she sank on my breast, and sobbed—

'My father! O my father!'

'Your father is Sir Peter Blakely's friend,' replied I, 'and he will not break the pledge he has given him. With his return, Catherine, my hopes and life perish together. Now only can you save yourself—now only can you save me. Fly with me!—be mine, and your father's blessing will not be withheld. Hesitate now, and farewell happiness.'

She hastily raised her head from my breast, she stood proudly before me, and, casting her bright blue eyes upon mine, with a look of piercing inquiry, said—

'Edward! what would you have me to do? Deep as my love for you is—and I blush not to confess it—would you have me to fly with you accompanied by the tears of blighted reputation—followed by the groans and lamentations of a heart-broken father—pointed at by the finger of the world as an outcast of human frailty? Would you have me to break the last cord that binds to existence the only being to whom I am related on earth—for whom have I but my father? My *hand* I shall *never* give to another; but I cannot, I will not leave my father's house. If Catherine Forrester has gained your *love*, she shall not forfeit your *esteem*. I may droop in secret, Edward, as a bud broken on its stem, but I will not be trampled on in public as a worthless weed.'

'Nay, my beloved, mistake me not,' returned I—'when the lamb has changed natures with the wolf, then, but not till then, could I breathe a thought, a word in your presence, that I would blush to utter at the gate of Heaven. Within two days, your father and his intended son-in-law will return, and the father's threats and tears will subdue the daughter's purpose. Catherine will be a wife!—Edward a——'

'Speak not impiously,' she cried, imploringly—'what—what can we do?'

The present moment only is left us,' replied I. 'To-night, become the wife of Edward Fleming, and happiness will be ours.'

Her pulse stood still; the blood rushed into her face and back to her heart, while her bosom heaved, and her cheeks glowed with the agony of incertitude, as she resolved and re-resolved.

But wherefore should I tire you with a recital of what you already know. That night, my Catherine became my wife. For a few months her father disowned us; but when the fortunes of the Prince began to ripen, through his instrumentality we were again received into his favour. Yet I was grieved to hear, that, in consequence of our marriage, Sir Peter Blakely's mind had become affected; for, while I detested him as a rival, I was compelled to esteem him as a man.

But now, Lewis, comes the misery of my story. You are aware that, before I saw my Catherine, I was a ruined man. Youthful indiscretions—but why call them indiscretions?—rather let me say my headlong sins—before I had well attained the age of manhood, contributed to undermine my estate, and the unhappy political contest in which we were engaged had wrecked it still more. I had ventured all that my follies had left me upon the fortunes of Prince Charles. You know that I bought arms, I kept men ready for the field, I made voyages to France, I assisted others in their distress; and, in doing all this, I anticipated nothing less than an earldom, when the Stuarts should again sit on the throne of their fathers. You had more sagacity, more of this world's wisdom; and you told me I was wrong—that I was involving myself in a labyrinth from which I might never escape. But I thought myself wiser than you. I knew the loyalty and the integrity of my own actions, and with me, at all times, to feel was to act. I had dragged ruin around me, indulging in a vague dream of hope; and now I had obtained the hand of my Catherine, and I had not the courage to inform her that she had wed that of a ruined man.

It was when you and I were at the University together, that the spirit of gambling threw its deceitful net around me, and my estate was sunk to half its value ere I was of age to enjoy it; the other half I had wrecked in idle schemes for the restoration of the Stuarts. When, therefore, a few weeks after our marriage, I removed with my Catherine to London, I was a beggar, a bankrupt, living in fashionable misery. I became a universal borrower, making new creditors to pacify the clamours of the old, and to hide from my wife the wretchedness of which I had made her a partner. And, O Lewis! the thought that she should discover our poverty, was to me a perpetual agony. It came over the fondest throbbings of my soul like the echo of a funeral bell, for ever pealing its sepulchral boom through the music of bridal joy. I cared not for suffering as it might affect myself; but I could not behold her suffer, and suffer for my sake. I heard words of tenderness fall from her tongue, in accents sweeter than the melody of the lark's evening song, as it chirming descends to fold its wings for the night by the side of its anxious mate. I beheld her smiling to beguile my care, and fondly watching every expression of my countenance, as a mother watches over her sick child; and the half-concealed tear following the smile when her efforts proved unavailing; and my heart smote me that she should weep for me, while her tears, her smiles, and her tenderness, added to my anguish, and I was unable to say in my heart, 'Be comforted.' It could not be affection which made me desirous of concealing our situation from her, but a weakness which makes us unwilling to appear before each other as we really are.

For twelve months I concealed, or thought that I had concealed, the bankruptcy which overwhelmed me as a helmless vessel on a tempestuous sea. But the Prince landed in Scotland, and the war began. I was employed in preparing the way for him in England, and, for a season, wild hopes, that made my brain giddy, rendered me forgetful of the misery that had hung over and haunted me. But the brilliant and desperate game was soon over; our cause was lost, and with it my hopes perished; remorse entered my breast, and I trembled in the grasp of ruin. Sir William Forrester effected his escape to France, but his estates were confiscated, and my Catherine was robbed of the inheritance that would have descended to her. With this came another pang, more bitter than the loss of her father's fortune; for he, now a fugitive in a strange land, and unconscious of my condition, had a right to expect assistance from me. The thought dried up my very heart's blood, and made it burn within me—and I thought I heard my Catherine soliciting me to extend the means of life to her father, which I was no longer able to bestow upon herself: for, with the ruin of our cause, my schemes of borrowing, and of allaying the clamour of creditors, perished.

But it is said that evils come not singly—nor did they so with me; they came as a legion, each more cruel than that which preceded it. Within three weeks after the confiscation of the estates of Sir William Forrester, the individual who held the mortgage upon mine died, and his property passed into the hands—of whom?—Heaven and earth Lewis, I can hardly write it. His property, including the mortgage on my estate, passed into the hands of—Sir Peter Blakely! I could have died a thousand deaths rather than have listened to the tidings. My estate was sunk beyond its value, and now I was at the mercy of the man I had injured—of him I hated. I could not doubt but that, now that I was in his power, he would wring from me his 'pound o' flesh' to the last grain—and he has done it!—the monster has done it! But to proceed with my history.

My Catherine was now a mother, and longer to conceal from her the wretchedness that surrounded us, and was now ready to overwhelm us, was impossible; yet I lacked the courage, the manliness to acquaint her with it, or prepare her for the coming storm.

But she had penetrated my soul—she had read our condition; and, while I sat by her side buried in gloom, and my soul groaning in agony, she took my hand in hers, and said—

'Come, dear Edward, conceal nothing from me. If I cannot remove your sorrows, let me share them. I have borne much, but, for you, I can bear more.'

'What mean ye, Catherine?' I inquired, in a tone of petulance.

'My dear husband,' replied she, with her wonted affection, 'think not I am ignorant of the sorrow that preys upon your heart. But brood not on poverty as an affliction. You may regain affluence, or you may not; it can neither add to nor diminish my happiness but as it affects you. Only smile upon me, and I will welcome penury. Why think of degradation or of suffering? Nothing is degrading that is virtuous and honest; and where honesty and virtue are, there alone is true nobility, though their owner be a hewer of wood. Believe not that poverty is the foe of affection. The assertion is the oft-repeated, but idle falsehood of those who never loved. I have seen mutual love, joined with content, within the clay walls of humble cotters, rendering their scanty and coarse morsel sweeter than the savoury dainties of the rich; and affection increased, and esteem rose, from the knowledge that they endured privation together, and for each other. No, Edward,' she added, hiding her face upon my shoulder, 'think not of suffering. We are young, the world is wide, and Heaven is bountiful. Leave riches to those who envy them, and affection will render the morsel of our industry delicious.'

My first impulse was to press her to my bosom; but pride and shame mastered me, and, with a troubled voice, I exclaimed—'Catherine!'

'O Edward!' she continued, and her tears burst forth, 'let us study to understand each other—if I am worthy of being your wife, I am worthy of your confidence.'

I could not reply. I was dumb in admiration, in reverence of virtue and affection of which I felt myself unworthy. A load seemed to fall from my heart, I pressed her lips to mine.

'Cannot Edward be as happy as his Catherine,' she continued; we have, at least, enough for the present. and, with frugality, we have enough for years. Come, love, wherefore will you be unhappy? Be you our purser?' And, endeavouring to smile, she gently placed her purse in my hands.

'Good Heavens!' I exclaimed, striking my forehead, and the purse dropped upon the floor; 'am I reduced to this? Never, Catherine!—never! Let me perish in my penury; but crush me not beneath the weight of my own meanness! Death!—what must you think of me?'

'Think of you?' she replied, with a smile, in which affection, playfulness, and sorrow met—'I did not think thatyou would refuse to be your poor wife's banker.'

'Ah, Catherine!' cried I, 'would that I had half your virtue—half your generosity.'

'The half?' she answered laughingly—'have you not the whole? Did I not give you hand and heart—faults and virtues?—and you, cruel man, have lost the half already! Ungenerous Edward!'

'Oh!' exclaimed I, 'may Heaven render me worthy of such a wife!'

'Come, then,' returned she, 'smile upon your Catherine —*it is all over now.*'

'What is all over, love?' inquired I.

'Oh, nothing, nothing,' continued she, smiling—'merely the difficulty a young husband has in making his wife acquainted with the state of the firm in which she has become a partner.'

'And,' added I, bitterly, 'you find it bankrupt.'

'Nay, nay,' rejoined she, cheerfully, 'not bankrupt; rather say, beginning the world with a small capital. Come, now, dearest, smile, and say you will be cashier to the firm of Fleming & Co.'

'Catherine!—O Catherine!' I exclaimed, and tears filled my eyes.

'Edward!—O Edward!' returned she, laughing, and mimicking my emotion; 'good by, dear—good by!' And, picking up the purse, she dropped it on my knee, and tripped out of the room, adding gaily—

For still the house affairs would call her hence.'

Fondly as I imagined that I loved Catherine, I had never felt its intensity until now, nor been aware of how deeply she deserved my affection. My indiscretions and misfortunes had taught me the use of money—they had made me to know that it was an indispensable agent in our dealings with the world; but they had not taught me economy. And I do not believe that a course of misery, continued and increasing throughout life, would ever teach this useful and prudent lesson to one of a warm-hearted and sanguine temperament; nor would any power on earth, or in years, enable him to put it in practice, save the daily and endearing example of an affectionate and virtuous wife I do not mean the influence which all women possess during the oftentimes morbid admiration of what is called a honeymoon; but the deeper and holier power which grows with years, and departs not with grey hairs—in our boyish fancies being embodied, and our young feelings being made tangible, in the never-changing smile of her who was the sun of our early hopes, the spirit of our dreams—and who. now, as the partner of our fate, ever smiles on us, and, by a thousand attentions, a thousand kindnesses and acts of love, becomes every day dearer and more dear to the heart where it is her only ambition to reign and sit secure in her sovereignity—while her chains are soft as her own bosom, and she spreads her virtues around us, till they become a part of our own being. like an angel stretching his wings over innocence. Such is the power and influence of every woman who is as studious to reform and delight the husband as to secure the lover.

Such was the influence which, I believed, I now felt over my spirit, and which would save me from future folly and from utter ruin. But I was wrong, I was deceived—yes, most wickedly I was deceived. But you shall hear. On examining the purse, I found that it contained between four and five hundred pounds in gold and bills.

'This,' thought I, 'is the wedding present of her father to my poor Catherine, and she has kept it until now! Bless her! Heaven bless her.'

I wandered to and fro across the room, in admiration of her excellence, and my bosom was troubled with a painful sense of my own unworthiness. I had often, when my heart was full, attempted to soothe its feelings by pouring them forth in rhyme. There were writing materials upon the table before me. I sat down—I could think of nothing but my Catherine, and I wrote the following verses

TO MY WIFE.

Call woman—angel, goddess, what you will—
With all that fancy breathes at passion's call,
With all that rapture fondly raves—and still
That one word—WIFE—outvies—contains them all
It is a word of music which can fill
The soul with melody, when sorrows fall
Round us, like darkness, and her heart alone
Is all that fate has left to call our own.

Her bosom is a fount of love that swells,
Widens, and deepens with its own outpouring,
And, as a desert stream, for ever wells
Around her husband's heart, when cares devouring
Dry up its very blood, and man rebels
Against his being!—When despair is lowering,
And ills sweep round him, like an angry river,
She is his star, his rock of hope for ever.

Yes; woman only knows what 'tis to mourn—
She only feels how slow the moments glide,
Ere those her young heart loved in joy return
And breathe affection, smiling by her side.
Hers only are the tears that waste and burn—
The anxious watchings, and affection's tide
That never, never ebbs!—hers are the cares
No ear hath heard, and which no bosom shares:

Cares, like her spirit, delicate as light
Trembling at early dawn from morning stars;—
Cares, all unknown to feeling and to sight
Of rougher man; whose stormy bosom wars
With each fierce passion in its fiery might;
Nor deems how look unkind, or absence, jars
Affection's silver chords by women wove,
Whose soul, whose business, and whose life is—LOVE!

I left the verses upon the table, that she might find them when she entered, and that they might whisper to her that I at least appreciated her excellence, however little I might have merited it.

Lewis, even in my solitary cell, I feel the blush upon my cheek, when I think of the next part of my history. My hand trembles to write it, and I cannot now. Methinks that even the cold rocks that surround me laughs at me derision, and I feel myself the vilest of human things. But I cannot describe it to-day—I have gone too far already, and I find that my brain burns. I have conjured up the past, and I would hide myself from its remembrance. Another day, when my brain is cool, when my hand trembles not, I may tell you all; but, in the shame of my own debasement, my reason is shaken from its throne."

Here ended the first part of the Hermit's manuscript; and on another. which ran thus, he had written the words—

"MY HISTORY CONTINUED."

"I told you, Lewis, where I last broke off my history, that I left the verses on the table for the eye of my Catherine. I doubted not that I would devise some plan of matchless wisdom, and that, with the money so unexpectedly come into my possession, I would redeem my broken fortunes. I went out into the streets, taking the purse with me, scarce knowing what I did, but musing on what to do. I met one who had been a fellow-gambler with me, when at the University.

'Ha! Fleming!' he exclaimed, 'is such a man alive! I expected that you and your Prince would have crossed the water together, or that you would have exhibited at Carlisle or Tower Hill.'

He spoke of the run of good fortune he had had on the previous night—(for he was a gambler still.) 'Five thousand!' said he, rubbing his hands, 'were mine within five minutes.'

'Five thousand!' I repeated. I took my Catherine's purse in my hand.

Lewis! some demon entered my soul, and extinguished reason. 'Five thousand!' I repeated again; 'it would rescue my Catherine and my child from penury.' I thought of the joy I should feel in placing the money and her purse again in her hands. I accompanied him to the table of destruction. For a time fortune, that it might mock my misery, and not dash the cup from my lips until they were parched, seemed to smile on me. But I will not dwell on particulars; my friend 'laughed to see the madness rise' within me. I became desperate—nay, I was insane—and all that my wife had put into my hands, to the last coin, was lost. Never, until that moment, did I experience how terrible was the torture of self-reproach, or how fathomless the abyss of human wretchedness. I would have raised my hand against my own life; but, vile and contemptible as I was, I had not enough of the coward within me to accomplish the act. I thought of my mother. She had long disowned me, partly from my follies, and partly that she adhered to the house of Hanover. But, though I had squandered the estates which my father had left me, I knew that she was still rich, and that she intended to bestow her wealth upon my sister; for there were but two of us. Yet I remembered how fondly she had loved me and I did not think that there was a feeling in a mother's breast that could spurn from her a penitent son—for nature, at the slightest spark, bursteth into a flame. I resolved, therefore, to go as the prodigal in the Scriptures, and to throw myself at her feet, and confess that I had sinned against Heaven, and in her sight.

I wrote a note to my injured Catherine, stating that I was suddenly called away, and that I would not see her again perhaps for some weeks. Almost without a coin in my pocket, I took my journey from London to Cumberland, where my mother dwelt.

Night was gathering around me when I left London, on the road leading to St Alban's. But I will not go through the stages of my tedious journey; it is sufficient to say, that I allowed myself but little time for sleep or rest, and, on the eighth day after my leaving London, I found myself, after an absence of eighteen years, again upon the grounds of my ancestors. Foot-sore, fatigued, and broken down my appearance bespoke way-worn dejection. I rather halted than walked along, turning my face aside from every passenger, and blushing at the thought of recognition. It was midday when I reached an eminence, covered with elm trees, and skirted by a hedge of hawthorn. It commanded a view of what was called the Priory, the house in which I was born, and which was situated within a mile from where I stood. The village church, surrounded by a clump of dreary yews, lay immediately at the foot of the hill to my right and the road leading from thence to the Priory crossed before me. It was a raw and dismal day; the birds sat shivering on the leafless branches, and the cold, black clouds, seemed wedged together in a solid mass, ready to fall upon the earth and crush it; and the wind moaned over the bare fields. Yet, disconsolate as the scene appeared, it was the soil of childhood on which I trode. The fields, the woods, the river, the mountains, the home of infancy, were before me; and I felt their remembered sunshine rekindling in my bosom the feelings that make a patriot. A thousand recollections flashed before me. Already did fancy hear the congratulations of my mother's voice, welcoming her prodigal—feel the warm pressure of her hand, and her joyous tears falling on my cheek. But again I hesitated, and feared that I might be received as an outcast. The wind howled around me—I felt impatient and benumbed—and, as I stood irresolute, with a moaning chime the church bell knelled upon my ear. A trembling and foreboding fell upon my heart; and, before the first echo of the dull sound died in the distance, a muffled peal from the tower of the Priory answered back the invitation of the house of death, announcing that the earth would receive its sacrifice. A veil came over my eyes, the ground swam beneath my feet; and again and again did the church bell issue forth its slow, funeral tone, and again was it answered from the Priory.

Emerging from the thick elms that spread around the Priory and stretched to the gate, appeared a long and melancholy cavalcade. My eyes became dim with a presentiment of dread, and they were strained to torture. Slowly and silently the sable retinue approached. The waving plumes of the hearse became visible. Every joint in my body trembled with agony, as though agony had become a thing of life. I turned aside to watch it as it passed, and concealed myself behind the hedge. The measured and grating sound of the carriages, the cautious trampling of the horses' feet, and the solemn pace of the poorer followers, became more and more audible on my ear. The air of heaven felt substantial in my throat, and the breathing I endeavoured to suppress became audible while the cold sweat dropped as icicles from my brow. Sadly, with faces of grief, unlike the expression of hired sorrow passed the solitary mutes; and, in the countenance of each, I recognised one of our tenantry. Onward moved the hearse and its dismal pageantry. My heart fell, as with a blow, within my bosom. For a moment I would have fancied it a dream; but the train of carriages passed on, their grating aroused me from my insensibility, and, rushing from the hedge towards one who for forty years had been a servant in our house—

'Robert!—Robert!' I exclaimed, 'whose funeral is this?

'Alack! Master Edward!' he cried, 'is it you? It i the funeral of my good lady—your mother!'

The earth swam round with me—the funeral procession, with a sailing motion, seemed to circle me—and I fell with my face upon the ground.

Dejected, way-worn as I was, I accompanied the body of my mother to its last resting-place. I wept over her grave, and returned with the chief mourners to the house of my birth; and there I was all but denied admission. I heard the will read, and in it my name was not once mentioned. I rushed from the house—I knew not, and I cared not where I ran—misery was before, behind, and around me. I thought of my Catherine and my child, and groaned with the tortures of a lost spirit.

But, as I best could, I returned to London, to fling myself at the feet of my wife, to confess my sins and my follies, to beg her forgiveness, yea, to labour for her with my hands. I approached my own door as a criminal. I shrank from the very gaze of the servant that ushered me in, and I imagined that he looked on me with contempt. But now, Lewis, I come to the last act of my drama, and my hand trembles that it cannot write—my soul is convulsed within me. I

thought my Catherine pure, sinless as a spirit of heaven—you thought so—all who beheld her must have thought as I did. But, oh! friend of my youth! mark what follows. I reached her chamber. I entered it—silently I entered it, as one who has guilt following his footsteps. And there, the first object that met my sight—that blasted it—was the man I hated, my former rival, he who held my fortunes in his hand—Sir Peter Blakely! My wife, my Catherine, my spotless Catherine, held him by the arm. O Heaven! I heard him say—'*Dear Catherine!*' and she answered him, 'Stay!—stay, my best, my only friend—do not leave me!'

Lewis! I could see, I could hear no more.

'Wretch!—villain!' I exclaimed. They started at my voice. My sword, that had done service in other lands, I still carried with me.

'Draw! miscreant!' I cried, almost unconscious of what I said or what I did. He spoke to me, but I heard him not. I sprang upon him, and plunged my sword in his body. My wife rushed towards me. She screamed. I heard the words—'Dear Edward!' but I dashed her from me as an unclean thing, and fled from the house.

Every tie that had bound me to existence was severed asunder. Catherine had snapped in twain the last cord that linked me with happiness. I sought the solitude of the wilderness, and there shouted her name, and now blessed her, and again———but I will go no farther. I long wandered a fugitive throughout the land, and, at length perceiving an apartment in a rock, the base of which Tweed washes with its waters, in it I resolved to bury myself from the world. In it I still am, and mankind fear me."

Here abruptly ended the manuscript of the Solitary.

A few years after the manuscript had been found, a party, consisting of three gentlemen, a lady, and two children, came to visit the King's Cove, and to them the individual who had found the papers related the story of the hermit.

"But your manuscript is imperfect," said one of them, "and I shall supply its deficiency. The Solitary mentions having found Sir Peter Blakely in the presence of his wife, and he speaks of words that passed between them. But you shall hear all:—

The wife of Edward Fleming was sitting weeping for his absence, when Sir Peter Blakely was announced. He shook as he entered. She started as she beheld him. She bent her head to conceal her tears, and sorrowfully extended her hand to welcome him.

'Catherine,' said he—and he paused, as though he would have called her by the name of her husband—'I have come to speak with you respecting your father's estate. I was brought up upon it; and there is not a tree, a bush, or a brae within miles, but to me has a tale of happiness and langsyne printed upon it, in the heart's own alphabet. But now the charm that gave music to their whispers is changed. Forgive me, Catherine, but it was you that, as the spirit of the scene, converted everything into a paradise where ye trode, that made it dear to me. It was the hope, the prayer, and the joy of many years, that I should call you mine—it was this that made the breath of Heaven sweet, and caused sleep to fall upon my eyelids as honey on the lips. But the thought has perished. I was wrong to think that the primrose would flourish on the harvest-field. But, Catherine, your father was my guardian—I was deeply in his debt, for he was to me as a father, and for his sake, and your sake, I have redeemed his property, and it shall be—it is yours.'

Lost in wonder, Catherine was for a few moments silent; but she at length said—

'Generous man, it must not—it shall not be. Bury me not—crush me not beneath a weight of generosity which from you I have been the last to deserve. I could not love, but I have ever esteemed you. I still do. But let not your feelings hurry you into an act of rashness. Time will heal, if it do not efface the wounds which now bleed; and you may still find a heart more worthy of your own, with whom to share the fortune of which you would deprive yourself.'

'Never! never!' cried he; 'little do you understand me. Your image and yours only was stamped where the pulse of life throbs in my heart. The dream that I once cherished is dead now—my grey hairs have awoke me from it. But I shall still be your friend—yea, I will be your husband's friend; and, in memory of the past, your children shall be as my children. Your husband's property is encumbered—throw these in the fire and it is again his.' And, as he spoke, he placed the deeds of the mortgage on a table before her.

'Hear me, noblest and best of friends!' cried Catherine—'hear me as in the presence of our Great Judge. Think not that I feel the less grateful for your generosity, that I solemnly refuse your offers, and adjure you to mention them not in my presence. As the wife of Edward Fleming, I will not accept what he would spurn. Rather would I toil with the sweat of my brow for the bare crust that furnished us with a scanty meal; and if I thought that, rather than share it with me, he would sigh after the luxuries he has lost, I would say unto him—'Go, you are free!' and, hiding myself from the world, weary Heaven with prayers for his prosperity.'

'Ye talk in vain—as I have said, so it is and shall be,' added he. 'And, now, farewell, dear Catherine.'

'Stay! stay!—leave me not thus!' she exclaimed, and grasped his arm. At that moment her husband returned and entered the room—and you know the rest. But, Sir Peter Blakely was not mortally wounded, as the Solitary believed. In a few months he recovered, and what he had promised to do he accomplished."

"That is something new," said the fisherman who had found the manuscript; "and who told ye, or how do ye know?—if it be a fair question."

"I," replied he who had spoken, "am the Lewis to whom the paper was addressed."

"You! you!" exclaimed the fisherman; "well, that beats a'—the like o' that I never heard before."

"And I," said another, "am Sir Peter Blakely—the grey-haired dreamer—who expected the April lily to bloom beneath an October sun." And he put a crown into the hand of the fisherman.

"And I," added the third, "am the Solitary himself—this my Catherine, and these my children. He whom I thought dead—dead by my own hand—the man whom I had wronged—sought for me for years, and in this my hermitage that was, he at length found me. It was the grey dawn when I beheld him, and I thought that the ghost of the murdered stood before me. But he spoke—he uttered words that entered my soul. I trembled in his presence The load of my guiltiness fell as a weight upon me. I was unable to speak, almost to move. He took my hand and led me forth as a child. In my confusion the papers which you found were left behind me. And now, when happiness has shed its light around me, I have come with my benefactor, my friend, my Catherine and my children, to view the cell of my penitence."



WILSONS

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

REUBEN PURVES;
OR,
THE SPECULATOR.

SPECULATION is the soul of business, it is the mainspring of improvement, it is essential to prosperity. Burns has signified that he could not stoop to crawl into what he considered as the narrow holes of bargain-making; and nine out of every ten persons, who consider themselves high-minded, profess to sympathize with him, and say he was right. But our immortal bard, in so saying, looked only at the odds and ends—the corners and the disjointed extremities of bargain-making, properly so called—and he suffered his pride and his prejudices to blind, in this instance, his mighty spirit, and contract his grasp, so that he saw not the all-powerful, the humanizing, and civilizing influence of the very bargain-making which he despised. True it is, that as a spirit of speculation or bargain-making contracts itself, and every day becomes more and more a thing of farthings and of fractions, it begets a grovelling spirit of meanness, that may eventually end in dishonesty; but as it expands, it exalts the man, imbues his mind with liberality, and benefits society. The spirit of commercial speculation will spread abroad, until it render useless the sword of the hero, cause it to rust in its scabbard, and to be regarded as the barbarous plaything of antiquity. It will go forth as a dove from the ark of society bearing the olive-branch of peace and of mutual benefits unto all lands, until men shall learn war no more.

But at present I am not writing an essay on speculation or enterprise, but the history of Reuben Purves, the speculator; and I shall therefore begin with it at once. Reuben was born in Galashiels, than which I do not know a more thriving town, or one more beautifully situated on all the wide Borders. As you pass it, seated on the outside of the Chevy-Chase coach on a summer day, (if perchance a sunny shower shall have fallen,) it lies before you as a long and silvered line, the blue slates reflecting back the sunbeams. In its streets, cleanliness and prosperity join hands, while before it and behind it rise hills, high enough to be called mountains, where the gorgeous heather purples in its season. Before it—I might say through it—wimples the Gala, almost laving its thresholds. There the spirit of speculation and of trade has taken up "a local habitation and a name," in the bosom of poetry. On the one hand is the magic of Abbotsford, on the other the memories of Melrose. But its description is best summed up in the condemnation of a cockney traveller, who said—"Vy, certainly, Galashiels would be wery pretty, were it not its vood and vater!"

But I again digress from the history of Reuben Purves. I have said that he was born in Galashiels; his father was a weaver, and the father brought his son up to his own profession. But although Reuben

> "was a wabster guid,
> Could stown a clue wi' ony body,"

his apprenticeship (if his instructions from his father could be called one) was scarce expired, when, like Othello, he found "his occupation gone," and the hand-loom was falling into disuse. Arkwright, who was long considered a mere bee-headed barber, had—though in a great measure by the aid of others—brought his mechanism to a degree of perfection that not only astonished the world, but held out a more inexhaustible and a richer source of wealth to Britain, than its mines did to Peru. Deep and bitter were the imprecations of many against the power-loom; for it is difficult for any man to see good in that which dashes away his hard-earned morsel from the mouths of his family, and leaves them calling in vain for food. But there were a few spirits who could appreciate the vast discovery, and who in it perceived not only the benefits it would confer on the country, but on the human race. Arkwright, who, though a wonderful man, was not one of deep or accurate knowledge, with a vanity which in him is excusable, imagined that he could carry out the results of his improvements to an extent that would enable the country to pay off the national debt. It was a wild idea; but, extravagant as it was, it must be acknowledged, that the fruits of his discoveries enabled Britain to bear up against its burdens, and maintain its faith in times of severest trial and oppression.

Reuben's father was one of those who complained most bitterly against the modern innovation. He said, "the work could never be like a man's work. It was a ridiculous novelty, and would justly end in the ruin of all engaged in it." It had, indeed, not only reduced his wages the one half, but he had not half his wonted employment, and he saw nothing but folly, ruin, and injustice in the speculation. Reuben, however, pondered more deeply; he entered somewhat into the spirit of the projector. He not only entertained the belief that it would enrich the nation, but he cherished the hope that it would enrich himself. How it was to accomplish his own advancement he did not exactly perceive, but he lived in the idea—he dreamed of it—nothing could make him divest himself of it; and he was encouraged by his mother saying—

"Weel, Reuben, I canna tell, things may be as ye say—only there is very little appearance o' them at present, when the wages o' you an' your faither put thegither, are hardly the half o' what ane o' ye could hae made. But ae thing is certain—*they who look for a silk gown, always get a sleeve o't.*"

"Nonsense, woman! ye're as bad as him," was the reply of his father; "wherefore would ye encourage the callant in his havers? I wonder, seeing the distress we are a' brought to, he doesna think shame to speak o' such a thing. Mak a fortune by the new-fangled system, indeed!—my truly! if it continue meikle langer, he winna be able to get brose without butter."

"Weel, faither," was the answer of Reuben, "we'll see; but you must perceive that there is no great improvement

can take place, let it be what it will, without doing injury to somebody. And it is our duty to watch every opportunity to make the most of it."

"In my belief, the laddy is out o' his head," rejoined the father; "but want will bring him to his senses."

Reuben, however, soon found that it became almost impossible to keep soul and body together by the labours of the loom. He therefore began to speculate on what he ought to do; and, like my honoured namesake, the respectable poet, but immortal ornithologist, he took unto himself a PACK, and, with it upon his shoulders, he resolved to perambulate the Borders. There was no disgrace in the calling, for it is as ancient, perhaps more ancient, than nobility; and we are told, that, even in the time of Solomon, "there were chapmen in the land in those days." Therefore, Reuben Purves became a chapman. He, as his original trade might lead one to suppose, was purely a dealer in "*soft*" goods; and when he entered a farm-house, among the bonny buxom girls, he would have flung his pack upon the table, and said—

"Here, now, my oraw lasses; look ye here! Here's the real upright, downright, elegant and irresistible muslin for frills, which no sweetheart upon this earth could have the power to withstand. And here's the gown-pieces—cheap, cheap—actually gien them awa—the newest, the most elegant patterns! Only look at them!—it is a sin to see them so cheap! Naething could be mair handsome! Now or never, lasses! Look at the ribbons, too—blue, red, yellow, purple, green, plain, flowered, and gauze. Now is the time for busking your cockernony—naething could withstand them wi' sic faces as yours—naething, naething, and that ye would find. It would be out o' the question to talk o't. Come, hinnies, only observe them, I'm sure ye canna but buy—or look at this lawn."

"O Reuben, man," they would have said, "they are very bonny; but we hae nae siller."

'Havers!" answered he, "young queens like you talking about siller! Sell your hair, dears, and buy lang lawn!"

Then did Reuben pull forth his scissors, and begin to exercise the functions of a hair-dresser, in addition to his calling as a chapman—thinning, and sometimes almost cropping, the fair, the raven, the auburn, or the brown tresses of the serving-maids, and giving them his ribbons and his cambrics in exchange for their shorn locks. The ringlets he disposed of to the hair-dressers in Edinburgh, Newcastle, or Carlisle, and he confessed that he found it a very profitable speculation; and where the colour or texture of the hair was beautiful, he invariably preferred bartering for it, to receive payment in money. This was a trait in Reuben's character, at the outset of his career as a speculator, which shewed that he had a correct appreciation of the real principles of trade—that he knew the importance of barter, without which commerce could not exist; and it afforded an indication of the future merchant.

He was in the habit of visiting every town, village, and farm-stead within sixty miles of the Borders—to the north and to the south—and taking in the entire breadth of the island. His visits became as regular as clock-work. No merchant now-a-days knows more exactly the day and almost the hour when he may expect a visit from the traveller of the house with which he deals, accompanied with an invitation to drink a bottle of wine, and pay his account, than the people in the Border villages knew when Reuben would appear amongst them.

It was shrewdly suspected that Reuben did not confine himself solely to the sale of ribbons, gown-pieces, and such like ware, but that his goodly pack was in fact a magazine, in which was concealed tea, cogniac, and tobacco. At all events, he prospered amazingly, and in the course of three years—though he lessened its weight at every villag he came to—his pack overgrew his shoulders, and prosperity compelled him, first, to have recourse to a pack-horse, and, before he had had it long, to a covered cart or caravan. In short, on arriving at a village, instead of going round from house to house, with his stock upon his shoulders, as he was wont to do, he sent round the drummer or bellman: or, where no such functionaries are known, he employed some other individual, with a key and a trencher, to go round the village and make the proclamation—

"This is to give notice, that Mr Reuben Purves, with his grand and elegant assortment of the newest and most fashionable varieties of soft-ware goods, *and other commodities*, all bought by him for ready money, so that great bargains may be expected, has just arrived, (at such an inn,) and will remain for this day only; therefore those who wish the real superior articles, at most excellent bargains, will embrace the present opportunity!"

Let not the reader despise Reuben, because he practised and understood the mysteries of puffing. There is nothing done in this world without it. No gardener ever "lichtlied" his own leeks. All men practise it, from the maker of books to the maker of shoe-blacking, or the vender of matches. From the grandiloquent advertisement of a metropolitan auctioneer, down to the "*only* true and particular account" of an execution, bawled by a flying-stationer on the streets, the spirit of puffing, in its various degrees, is to be found. Therefore, we blame not Reuben—he only did what other people did, though, perhaps, after a different fashion, and with better success. It gave a promise of his success as a tradesman. He said he ventured on it as a speculation, and finding it to suit his purpose, he continued it. In truth, scarce had the herald made the proclamation which I have quoted, until Reuben's cart was literally besieged. His customers said, "it went like a cried fair"—"there was nae getting forward to it."

Moreover, he was always civil, he was always obliging. He had a smile, and a pleasant and merry word for every one. Buy or not buy, his courtesy never failed him. In short, he would do anything to oblige his customers, save to give them credit; and that, as he said, was not because he had any doubt of their honesty, or that he was unwilling to serve them, but because he had it laid down as a rule never to trust a single penny, which rule he could not break. He was also possessed of a goodly person, was some five feet ten inches in height, he had fair hair, a ruddy cheerful countenance, intelligent blue eyes, and his years but little exceeded thirty.

At this period of Reuben's history, there lived in the town of Moffat, one Miss Priscilla Spottiswoode. Now, Priscilla was a portly, and withal a comely personage, and though rather stout, she was tall in proportion to her stoutness. Nothing could surpass the smoothness of the clear red and white upon her goodly countenance. There was by no means too much red, and constitutional good-nature shed a sort of perpetual smile over her features, like a sunbeam irradiating a tranquil lake. In short, it was a reproach to every bachelor in the town and parish of Moffat, to have permitted forty and four summers to roll over the head of Priscilla, without one amongst them having the manliness to step forward and offer his hand to rescue her from a state of single solitariness. She had been for more than twenty years the maid, or rather I might say, the nurse, of an old and rich lady, who, at her death, bequeathed to her five hundred pounds.

Reuben first saw Priscilla, about three months after she had received the legacy. "Five hundred pounds," thought he, "would set a man on his feet." He also gazed on her kind, comely, smiling countenance, and he said within himself, that "the men of Moffat were blind." And eventually he concluded, communing with himself, that the fair Priscilla was a speculation worthy the thinking of. She wished to purchase a few yards of lace for cap borders, and such like purposes; and as Reuben sold them to her, he said to her a

hundred pleasant things, and he let drop some well-timed and well-turned compliments, and she blushed as his eulogy on the lace aptly ended in praise of her own fair features. Yet this was not all; for he not only sold to her fifty per cent. cheaper than he would have parted with his goods to any other purchaser, but he politely—by what appeared a wilful sort of accident—contrived to give her a full yard into her bargain. Priscilla looked upon Reuben with more than complacency; she acknowledged (that is, to herself) that he was the best-looking, polite, and most sensible young man she had ever seen. She resolved that in future she would deal with no one else; and indeed she had got such an excellent bargain of the lace, that she had come to the determination of again visiting his stock, and making a purchase of other articles. And, added she, to a particular friend—

"It does a body good to buy from him, for he is always so pleasant."

But Reuben saved her the trouble; for early the next day he called at her house with a silk dress under his arm. He said—

"It was the last piece of the kind he had—indeed it was a perfect beauty, equal to real India, and would become her exceedingly—and not to think about the price, for that was no object!"

"What then am I to think about?" thought Priscilla; and she admired the silk much, but, peradventure, if the truth were told, she admired its owner more.

Reuben spent more than two hours beneath the roof of the too-long-neglected spinster. During those two hours she blushed, his tongue faltered, and when he rose to depart, he had neither the silk beneath his arm, nor the cash for it in his pocket; but he shook her hand long and fervently, and he would have saluted her fair cheek—but true love, like true genius, people say, is always modest. Priscilla, on being left alone, felt her heart in a very unusual tumult; and now she examined her face in a mirror, and again admired the silk which he had presented to her. She had always heard him spoken of as a steady, thriving, and deserving young man; and it became a settled point in her mind, that if he directly popped the important question, she would be as candid with him, and at once answer—"*Yes.*"

Reuben was frequently seen in Moffat after this, even when he brought no goods for sale; and within six months after her purchase of the lace, the sacred knot, which no man may unloose, was tied between them; and at the age of forty and four years and four months, but before time had "wrote a wrinkle" on her fair brow, Miss Priscilla Spottiswoode blushed into Mrs Purves.

While following his avocation as a chapman, Reuben had accumulated somewhat more than two hundred pounds, which, with the five hundred that his wife brought him, raised his capital to more than seven hundred. But he was not a man to look only at the needle point of things, or whose soul would be lost in a nutshell. Onward! onward! was the uling principle of Reuben—he had been fortunate in all his speculations, and he trusted to be fortunate still. Never, during all his wanderings, had he lost sight of the important discoveries of Arkwright, and of the improvements which were every day being made upon them; and while he was convinced that they would become a source of inexhaustible wealth to the nation, he still cherished the hope and the belief that they would enrich himself. He said also—and Mrs Purves agreed with him—that travelling the country was a most uncomfortable life for a married man. He therefore sold his horse and his covered cart, disposed of his stock at prime cost, and, with his wife and capital, removed to Manchester.

He took a room and a cellar, at the top of Dean Street, and near to the foot of Market Street

"Where merchants most do congregate."

The upper room served them for bedchamber, parlour, kitchen and all, while the cellar he converted into a wareroom. Perhaps, having more than seven hundred pounds to begin the world with, some may think that he might have taken more commodious premises; but rents were becoming high in Manchester—many a great merchant has begun business in a cellar—and Reuben, quoting the words of poor Richard, said—

"Vessels large may venture more.
But little boats should keep near shore."

And he farther said, "I am but serving my time yet; we must creep before we walk."

Never was any man who prospered in the affairs of this world more diligent in business than Reuben Purves, and in Priscilla he found an admirable helpmate. She soon learned the name, the price, and the quality of every description of goods; and when he was necessarily absent, she could attend to the orders of customers as promptly as himself. The reader unacquainted with the Manchester mode of business, is not to suppose that Reuben, although his stock was wedged up in a cellar, was a retail draper or haberdasher. Its magnitude considered, there are fewer such in Manchester than in any other town in the kingdom; but Reuben commenced as a wholesale merchant—one who supplies the country dealers. He always went to the markets to purchase with the money in his hand, as Joseph the patriarch's brethren came to him to buy corn—and pity it is that the good old custom has too much fallen into disuse. He made his purchases chiefly from the small manufacturers, to whom ready money was an object of importance, and consequently bought his goods to much advantage to himself. During his extensive perambulations on the Borders also, he had become generally acquainted with the drapers in all the towns upon his circuit; and at the seasons when they generally visit Manchester, he might have been seen rapidly passing along what is now called Piccadilly, and passing the coach from the north, just as it drew up to the inn; and if one whose face he knew stepped off it or out of it, Reuben turned suddenly round as if by accident, took the north country purchaser by the hand, and invited him home to "eat beef" with him, or to take supper, as the case might be. He was generally successful; for to resist his solicitations was a matter of difficulty, and after partaking of a frugal meal and a single glass, the stranger was invited to examine the stock in the wareroom, and seldom failed of becoming the purchaser of a part. By such means, and perseverance, his business in a few years increased exceedingly. He was of opinion, that there is hardly any thing too difficult for resolute perseverance to accomplish or overcome, at least he always found it so; and I confess I am very much of his mind.

Within three years he had taken extensive warerooms. He had a clerk, a salesman, four warehousemen, a traveller, and a porter. He had also taken his father from the loom. Reuben had seized fortune at the flood, and he floated down with the stream. He said he never undertook a speculation, but he was convinced in his own mind it would be successful. He also said, that fortune-making was like courtship; it was never venture never win—only to know what you were venturing upon.

I should have mentioned, that, previous to this, Priscilla had made Reuben the happy father of twin daughters, and the one they named Rachel, the other Elizabeth. The mother gloried in her children, and her husband looked on them with delight. He was a fortunate man and a happy one; and his cup of felicity, if it did not run over, was well filled.

In a short time, Reuben not only supplied with goods to a great extent the merchants on the Borders, but throughout the three kingdoms; and he also exported extensively to other countries, and even to some where the importation of British goods was prohibited.

"A fig for their tariffs," he was wont to say, snapping his fingers; "the profit will cover the risk. The principle of trade is like the principle of steam—there is no restraining it. Neither kings, emperors, congresses, nor laws, are a match for it. They canna cage it up like a bird. They might as well say to the waves of the sea, 'hitherto shalt thou come and no farther,' as to the spirit of trade—'*stop!*'"

In these speculations, however, Reuben frequently experienced the common fate of the smuggler; and the goods which he sent into countries where they were prohibited, were seized. He was of too ardent a temperament to be merely the purchaser and vender of other men's manufactures, and eventually he erected a cotton-mill of his own, a few miles out of Manchester.

And here it will, perhaps, be more acceptable to the reader, that I detail the remainder of Reuben's narrative in his own words, as he related it to an old schoolfellow in his native town, after an absence from it of more than thirty years. It was delivered with his unchanged Scottish accent, and with many Scottish phrases and modes of expression, which a residence of more than three times ten years in England had not destroyed:—

"I was now," said he—alluding to the erection of the mill—"at what I had always considered as the very pinnacle of my ambition—the proprietor of a cotton-mill, and of one, too, that had cost me several thousands in completing it. I had no manner of doubt, but that it would turn out the master-speculation of my existence; for, bless ye, at that period, to have a mill was to have a mine. A spinning-jenny was worth its weight in rubies. There was Arkwright, made a fortune like a nobleman's in a jiffy; and Robert Peel, greatly to his credit, from being a weaver lad, I may say, in less than no time, made a fortune that could have bought up half the gentry in the country. Indeed, wealth just poured in upon the mill-owners; and, I must confess, they werna bad times for the like o' me, that bought their calicoes, and got them dressed and printed to sell them out, as ye may judge from my having been able to erect a mill of my own before I had been many years in business. But, I must confess, that the mill ran between me and my wits. All the time it was building, I was out and in frae the town to see how the workmen were getting on, wet or dry; and, I dare to say, that if I dreamed about it once during the twelve months it was in hands, I dreamed about it a thousand times. Many a time Priscilla has said to me—

'Reuben, I doubt ye are thinking owre meikle about that mill, and really it's no right—it is sinfu. I fear it is enough to mak the concern no prosper.'

'My dear,' I used to say, 'do ye consider what an immense speculation it is?—it is like death or life to me; and, if I didna think o' it, and look after the workmen to see how they are getting on wi it, who, do ye suppose, would? There is nothing like a man looking after his own concerns; and, where there is sae meikle at stake, it is impossible but to think o't.'

But, sir, I looked after the progress of the mill, and my thoughts were taken up concerning it, to the neglect of my more immediate business. After commencing in the wholesale line, I found it impossible to abide by my original rule of—no credit; and, during my frequent absence from my warehouse, my salesman had admitted the names of men into my books of whom I knew nothing, but whom I afterwards learned were not to be trusted. Their payments were not forthcoming in the proper season; and, in looking after them, I put off insuring the mill at the time I intended. Delay, sir, is a curse to a person in business; it is as dangerous as the blandishments of a harlot to the young—and so I found it. On the very night that the machinery and every thing was completed, I allowed the spinners and others that I had engaged, to have a supper and dance in it wi their wives and sweethearts. I keepit them company for an hour mysel, and very merry they were. But, after charging them all to keep sober and harmonious one with another, and to see that they locked the doors behind them when they broke up, and to leave everything right, I wished them good-night; and they drank my health, and gave me three cheers as I left them. I got into my gig, and drove home to Manchester. But I dinna think I had been three hours in bed, when Priscilla gied me a dunch with her elbow, and, says she—

'Waken, Reuben! waken!—there's an unco knocking at the street door.'

'Hoot! it will be some drunk body passing,' says I, and turned round on my side to compose myself to sleep again.

But the knock, knocking, continued louder and louder.

'That is nae drunk body,' said Priscilla—'something has happened.'

I started owre the bed, and I was hardly half-dressed, when I heard the street door open, and the servant lass come fleein up the stair.

'What is it?' cried I.

'Oh, sir—the mill!—the mill!' said she.

Had she shot me, she could not have rendered me more stupified.

'What about the mill?' cries I, all shaking with agitation.

'Oh, it's on fire—it's on fire!' replied the lassie.

I heard Priscilla scream, 'On fire!' and she also sprang to the floor.

I cannot tell ye how I threw on my coat—I know that I banged out without a napkin about my neck, and, rushing down the stairs, I couldna even stop to get the horse from the stable and saddled, but away I flew upon my feet. If ever a man ran as if for his life, it was me that night. It was six miles to the mill, but I never slacked for a single moment. I didna even discover, though the stones were cutting my feet, that I had come away without my shoes. The mill absorbed both thought and sense—I was dead to everything else. But, oh, upon reaching it, what a sight presented itself to my view! There was the great red flames roaring and raging up the height of its five stories; and the very wheels of the machinery, seen through the windows, glowing as bright as when in the hands o' the smith that formed them. The great suffocating clouds of smoke came rolling about me, and even blinding me. Hundreds of women ran about screaming, some carrying water, and some running in the way of others, and drunken men staggered to and fro, like lost spirits in the midst of their tortures. O sir, it was an awful sight for any one to behold; but for me to witness it, was terrible! For some minutes, I was bereft of both speech and reason; and, had the spectators not held me back, I would have rushed into the middle of the flames. Crash after crash, the newly erected walls and the floors fell in, and I was a helpless spectator of the destruction of my own property. In one night, yea, in one hour, more than half of the fortune that I had struggled for years to gather together, was swept, as by a whirlwind, from off the face of the earth.

I stood till I beheld the edifice that had been the pride of my heart, a mass of smoking ruins, with, I may say, scarce one stone left upon another. All the manufacturers round about sympathized with me very sincerely, and one of them drove me back to Manchester in his drosky. When I entered my own house, I believe I appeared like a person on whom sentence of death has been passed, as he is removed from the bar and led back to his prison.

'Weel, Reuben,' asked Priscilla, in her own calm and gentle way, 'is the damage great?'

'Oh, my dear!' said I, 'there is nothing left but a heap o' ashes! Nothing! nothing!—we are ruined!'

'No, no, replied she, as quietly as ever, 'we arena ruined. The back is aye made fit for the burden. The Hand that sent the misfortune (as we think it) upon us, will enable us to bear up against it. Now, just ye compose yersel, and dinna be angry at what I am gaun to say; but we are just as rich now as we were three years ago; and, I am sure, Reuben, we were quite as happy then as we are now. Ye have still a very excellent business, and a fortune far beyond onything that you and I could ever expect to possess when we cam thegither. You have your health and I have mine; and our twa bits o' bairnies are growing up to be a comfort to us baith. They will ne'er feel the loss o' the cotton-mill, and you and I ne'er kenned the guid o't. Wherefore, then, should ye grieve? Ye ought rather to be thankfu' that it is nane o' your family that is taen frae ye. And, I have nae doubt, that, although we self-wise and short-sighted mortals canna see it, this visitation will be for the guid o' us a'. It is better that ye should lose the mill than forget your Maker; and, forgie me for saying it, but I feared it was setting your heart upon the things o' this world, to a degree which did not become the faither o' a Christian family. Therefore, let me entreat you to say, 'His will be done,' and to believe that this has fallen upon you for the best. Our loss is not so great but that, if times keep good, we may soon owercome it.'

I had often experienced the value of my wife, and admired her meek, patient spirit, and affectionate heart; but I never, until this trial came upon me, knew her real worth. She enabled me to begin the world; ay, sir, and this far she has guided me through it. She was better than twelve years older than me—but what of that? She looked as young like at forty as ever I saw another woman do at twenty; and now, when she has been my wife for thirty years, I hardly ken her aulder. A glaikit lassie, under such circumstances, might have wrung her hands, and upbraided me for allowing the supper and the dance; but Priscilla strove only to comfort me, to imbue my mind with fortitude, and to turn the accident to my eternal advantage. I had long loved and esteemed her, but I now reverenced her.

I sat and I listened to her, and looked in her face for the space of ten minutes, without speaking a word; and, at last, fairly overpowered wi' her gentleness and her tenderness, I rose and took her hand; and 'Priscilla,' says I, 'for your sake, dear, I will think no more about the matter. The mill is destroyed; but, as you say, we may overcome the loss—and I shall try.'

Though I have as keen feelings as onybody, I was not a person to sit down long, and croon and shake my head over misfortunes that couldna be helped. I might be driven back from an object, and defeated in accomplishing it; but it would be necessary to take my life before I could be made to relinquish my attempts, or to conquer me. Perseverance, and a restless, ambitious spirit of enterprise, spurred me on.

I endeavoured to extend my business more widely than ever; and, as I had sometimes had losses with houses on the Continent, I resolved to visit France, and Germany, and other places, myself, and see in what situation the land lay. I did so; and in Holland and Switzerland in particular, I entered into what proved some very profitable speculations. Now, sir, it is my conviction, that where there is no speculation, there can be no luck. As well might a man with his hands in his pockets expect a guinea to drop into them. People who, perhaps, have been born with a silver spoon in their mouths, or had enough to purchase them a hot joint every day, thrust upon them by accident, will tell you, in speaking of any particular subject—'Oh, I will have nothing to do with it—it is only a speculation.' Now, sir, but for some speculation that had been entered into before they were, the one would have neither had the silver spoon in his teeth, nor the other the hot joint. Without speculation, commerce could not exist. In the community where its spirit is not felt, they must be dull as horses in a ring; moving round and round as regularly and as monotonously as the wheels of a machine, to procure the every-day bread and cheese of existence. I have been a speculator all my life—I am a speculator still. Neither you nor I have time for me to enter into the particulars of thirty years' enterprises. It is true I have lost by some, but in more I have been successful, or until this day I would been a hand-loom weaver in this my native town of Galashiels.

But, sir, within three years, I had built another mill. I commenced manufacturer, and prospered; and, in a short time, I began the business of printer also. You understand me—it is a calico-printer I mean, not a book or newspaper printer; for if, in a town in Lancashire, you ask for a printer, nobody would think of shewing you to a consumer of ink and paper.

Our two daughters had been educated at a boarding-school in Yorkshire; but they were now come home, and were, I may say, women grown, for they were eighteen; and, although I say it, that, perhaps, ought not to say it, remarkably fine-looking young women they were. People said that Elizabeth was a perfect picture; though, so far as I could judge, Rachel was the bonniest of the two; but they were remarkably like each other. There, however, was this difference between them—Rachel was of a sedate and serious disposition, and very plain in her dress, even plainer, sometimes, than I wished to see her; but she was always so neat, that she set whatever she put on. Elizabeth, on the other hand, though a kind-hearted lassie, was more thoughtless, and more given to the vanities of this world. When her sister was at her books, she was at her looking-glass. She was as fond of dress as Rachel was the reverse. I have often said to her—

'O Bessy! Bessy!—dress will turn your head some day or other. Ye will frighten ony man from having ye.'

'Don't be afraid of that, father,' she replied, laughing, for there was no putting her out of temper, (she was like her mother in that;) 'there is no danger, and it is time enough yet.'

She was also excessively fond of amusements—such as balls, concerts, plays, and parties; much fonder, indeed, than it was agreeable for me or her mother to observe. And we frequently expostulated with her; for, though we did not wish to debar her entirely from such amusements, yet there is a medium to be observed in all things, and we did not like to see her going beyond that medium.

Well, sir, she had been at a party one night in Mosley Street, and a young gentleman, who, I afterwards understood, had shewn her a great deal of attention throughout the evening, saw her home. There was no harm in this; but he called again the next day, and, as I shortly after learned, every day. So, when I heard this, I thought it was right and proper that I should see him, and learn who and what he was. I accordingly stopped at home a forenoon for the express purpose, but not much, as I easily observed, to the satisfaction of Elizabeth. About eleven o'clock, the gentleman came as usual. I easily saw that he was rather taken aback on perceiving me; but he recovered his self-possession as quick as the eyelids can twinkle, and perfectly confused me with his superabundance of bows and scrapes. I did not like his appearance. He was dressed like a perfect fop. He wore silk stockings, and his feet were wedged into bits of French-soled pumps, which, to my eye, made it perfectly painful to look on them. He had on a light-green, very fine, and very fashionable coat and trousers, with a pure white waistcoat, and a ribbon about his neck. He also carried a cane with an image on the head o't; and he had a great bunch of black curls on each side of his head, which, I verily believe, were pomatumed, brushed, and frizzled.

I must put an end to your visits, billy,' thinks I, before ever he opened his lips.

He was what some ladies would call—'a most agreeable young man.' In fact, I heard one (not my daughter) pronounce him to be 'a prodigious fine gentleman!' 'Prodigious!' thought I, when I heard it. He had a great flow of speech and spirits, and could run over all the scandal of the town with a flippancy that disgusted me, but delighted many. He could also talk like a critic about dancers, singers, actors, and race-horses, and discuss the fashions like a milliner. All this I ascertained during the half hour I was in his company. He also gabbled French and Italian, and played upon a thing like a sort of bass fiddle without a bow, that they call a guitar. I at once set him down in my own mind for a mere fortune-hunter. He was a shallow puppy; he carried all on the outside of his head, and nothing within it. I found he knew no more about business than the man in the moon. But he pretended to be the son of an Honourable, and carried cards with the words, '*Charles Austin, Esq.*,' engraved upon them. He was above belonging to any profession—he was a gentleman at large.

Disgusted as I was with him, I had not the face to rise and say to him—'Sir, I will thank you to go out of my house, and not to enter it again.' And from the manner in which I had been brought up, I had not the manner of what is called—bowing a person to the door. But what vexed me most, while he remained, was to observe that even Priscilla sometimes laughed at the silly things he said, which, as I afterwards told her, was just encouraging him. When he left the house, I turned to Elizabeth, and—

'Noo, Betty, hinny,' says I, 'tak my advice, as yer faither and yer freend, and ne'er speak to that young man again, nor alloo him to keep ye company; for, as sure as my name is Reuben, there is something essentially bad aboot him.'

Sheh ung her head, and there was a tear in her ee, and, I think for the first time ever I had observed it in my days, she looked rather sulky; but I could get no satisfaction from her.

I think it was between two and three months after this—during which time I had seen and heard no more of the fashionable Charles Austin—that, having business to transact in Liverpool, I took Priscilla down with me in the gig, for the benefit of her health. It was in the summer season, and eleven o'clock had chimed from the steeple of the collegiate church before we returned at night. But never, never shall I forget our miserable home-coming. There was our poor Rachel, sitting by herself, wringing her hands, and the tears running down her bonny cheeks.

'Rachel! dear Rachel! what is the matter, love?' cried her mother and myself at the same instant.

'O Elizabeth!—Elizabeth is away!' sobbed my poor bairn.

Priscilla was stupified, and she repeated the word 'Away!' but the truth broke over me in a moment; and I sank back into a chair, as helpless, for all the world, as a new-born infant.

Rachel tried to compose herself the best way she could; and she informed us, that her sister had left the house about ten o'clock in the forenoon, and that she had not since returned. She also mentioned, that Elizabeth had been seen in the company of Charles Austin shortly after leaving the house; and that, when she did not return in the course of the day, suspecting that they had fled to Gretna, she had sent my principal clerk, Thomas Galloway, after them, in a chaise and four, to bring back Elizabeth.

Distressed as I was, I admired the presence of mind which Rachel had exhibited. She had done all that I could have done myself, had I been at home; and a fitter person than Thomas Galloway could not have been sent. His zeal, honesty, and industry, had long rendered him a favourite with me; and, though he was but a young man, I treated him more as an equal than a clerk. Nor had I any doubt but in the mission he was sent upon, he would shew as much courage, if such an article were required, as he had at all times shewn zeal and prudence in my service.

But Thomas returned. He had heard nothing of them on the road, and they had not been at Gretna. These tidings threw us all into deeper affliction; and a week passed, and we could hear nothing of my daughter, and our misery increased. But, on the ninth day after her disappearance, a letter arrived from her. It was dated *Coldstream*. My fears read its contents before it was opened. In it she poured forth a rhapsody in praise of her 'dear Charles,' as she termed him, and said, if we knew his virtues as well as she knew them, we would love him as she did. She begged forgiveness for the step she had taken, and sought permission to return with her husband, and receive mine and her mother's blessing. She concluded the letter by signing herself our 'affectionate and dutiful daughter, *Elizabeth Austin*.'

'*Dutiful!*—the ungrateful, the silly gipsy!' cried I, flinging down the letter, and trampling it under my feet, in pure madness; 'she shall never inherit a penny of mine—she shall never enter my door. She is ruined—she has married worthlessness and misery!'

It was some time before Priscilla said anything; but I saw she was very greatly affected. At last, the mother's love for her offspring got the better of every other consideration in her heart, and she endeavoured to soothe me, and to prevail on me to forgive Elizabeth, and to see her again.

I had intended that the marriage portion of my daughters, on the very day they became wives, should be ten thousand each, providing that I approved of the match—though I by no manner of means wished or intended to direct their choice, or control their affections, further than it was my duty as a parent to see that they did not throw themselves away. But I was perfectly persuaded that, to give ten thousand, or the half of it, or any sum, to such a person as Elizabeth had got, would be no better than to fling it into the fire.

However, the entreaties and persuasion of Priscilla prevailed. I consented that Elizabeth should return, and gave her husband five thousand pounds as her dowry, with a promise of more, if they should conduct themselves to my satisfaction. He had not received the money many days when they set out for London.

Some time previous to this, I thought I had observed a sort of particular kindness between my daughter Rachel and my clerk, Thomas Galloway, of whom I have already spoken, and to whose worth I have borne testimony. He was a native of Newton-Stewart, and a young man of humble parentage, like myself; but I liked him nothing the worse upon that account; for, in my opinion, there is no real respectability, save that only which a man purchases through his own merits. Now, I once or twice, when I went out to enjoy the air in the summer nights, after business hours, perceived Rachel and Thomas oxtering together along the green lanes, behind a place in the suburbs that is called Strangeways. Such was the high opinion that I had of him, that I was determined, if there was anything between them, to offer no obstacle in the world to their marriage. I considered that a character, a disposition, and a knowledge of business, such as Thomas had, were far before riches. But I knew that, in certain respects, both of the two were such bashful creatures, that neither of them would dare to mention the matter to me. So, after their familiarity became every day more apparent, though they tried to hide it, and when, at different times, I had tried humorously to sound both of them in vain, I mentioned the subject to Priscilla. I found that she had perceived it long before me; for women have quick eyes in such matters. But she said that Rachel was such a strange, reserved lassie, that, though her own bairn, she could not speak to her with a mother's freedom; though, now that she had heard my mind concerning the match, she would ask

Rachel how matters stood between her and Thomas Galloway, that very day.

She, therefore, went into the room where Rachel was sitting sewing, and, after talking about various matters, by way of not just breaking the matter at once, she said—

'Rachel, dear, are ye aware if your faither has ever made ony sort o' recompense to Thomas Galloway for his trouble in gaun a' the way to Gretna after Elizabeth, when the foolish lassie ran away wi' young Mr Austin?'

'I do not think it,' replied Rachel.

Then,' said her mother, 'he has not done what he ought to have done. Indeed, I think he would only be doing his duty if he were to do something for Thomas; for he is a fine, genteel, deserving lad. Do ye not think so, dear?'

This was a home-thrust which our bit lassie was not prepared for, and it brought the vermilion to her cheeks. But, after a moment's hesitation, she said, though not without a manifest degree of confusion—

'Yes, I think him a very deserving lad.'

But her mother had made the first step, and she was not to be put back, and, therefore, she continued—

'He is a lad that will rise in the world yet, and he weel deserves it; for a kinder, or more prudent, and obliging young man, I never saw—and I am glad, hinny, that ye hae the good sense to think weel o' him.'

'Mother!' said Rachel, and her confusion greatly increased.

Come, love,' continued Priscilla, 'ye needna blush or conceal onything frae yer mother. She is a bad mother, indeed, that a daughter daurna trust wi' a virtuous secret; and I hope ye ne'er saw onything in me, Rachel, that need debar ye frae making yer feelings known to me. Dinna suppose, love, that I am sae short-sighted but that I hae observed the tender affection that has been long springing up between ye; and I have not only observed it, but I hae dune sae wi' satisfaction and pleasure, for I know not a young man that I could have more credit by in calling him son-in-law. So, look up, dear, and tell me at once, am I not right—would ye not prefer Thomas to any man ye have seen, for your husband?' And she kindly took our daughter by the hand.

'*Yes*, mother!' faltered my sweet, blushing blossom; and she sank her head on her mother's breast.

'That is right, hinny,' said her mother; 'but ye micht hae tauld me before, and it would hae saved ye baith mony a weary hour o' uneasiness, I hae nae doobt. But ye shall find nae obstacles in yer way, for it is a match that will gie baith yer faither and me great satisfaction. He has observed the attentions o' Thomas to ye as weel as mysel, and spoke to me concerning it this very hour. Indeed, I may just tell ye, that he desired me to mention the subject to ye; and if I found that yer feelings were as we supposed, that the marriage should immediately take place. And he will also take Thomas into partnership.'

Rachel, poor thing, grat with joy when her mother told her what I had said; and when Thomas heard of it, he could have flung himself at my feet. The upshot was, that, in a few weeks, they were married, and I took Thomas into partnership with me, which took a great burden off my shoulders; and, more particularly, as I had recently entered into a canal speculation, and become one of the principal shareholders and directors of the company.

For twelve months from the time that Elizabeth went to London, we had but two letters from her; and one of them was abusing her sister for what she termed her 'grovelling spirit,' in marrying her father's clerk, and bringing disgrace upon the family. When I saw the letter, my answer back to her was—

'Elizabeth, my woman, do not forget yourself. Your sister has married a deserving lad, and your mother married a packman!'

As to her husband, I never, in my born days, had a scribe from his pen. But I heard, from people that had business in London, that they were flinging away the money I had given them with both hands; and that Elizabeth, so far from being a check upon her husband's extravagance, thoughtlessly whirled round with him in the vortex of fashionable dissipation.

The third letter we received from her was written about fourteen months after her marriage. It was in a strain of the wildest agony. In one line, she implored to have her full dowry bestowed upon her, and in the next she demanded it—and again she entreated me to release her 'dear Charles,' who, as she termed it, had been imprisoned for the paltry sum of five hundred pounds. I saw plainly that, to do any thing for them would be money thrown away, and only encouraging them in their ridiculous, not to say wicked, course of fashion and folly. Therefore, in a way, I had made up my mind to let them feel what distress was, so that they might come to some kind of an understanding of the value and the use of money, which it was as clear as the sun at noonday that neither the one nor the other of them had. But Priscilla was dreadfully distressed; I never had seen anything put her so much about. We held a sort of family parliament, consisting of my wife and my self, Rachel and her husband, to consider what was best to be done. Rachel, poor thing, pled hard for her sister, which I was pleased to see, though I said nothing; and Thomas suggested that I should release Charles Austin from prison, and give Elizabeth two hundred pounds for their immediate wants, and that I would set up her husband in whatever line of business he might prefer; but that I neither could nor should keep them in idleness and extravagance. This advice was agreed to. I released my hopeful son-in-law from prison, and sent two hundred pounds to my daughter, with a long letter of admonition, entreaty, and advice.

We heard no more of them for six months; and I wrote to Elizabeth again, and her mother wrote, and so did Rachel; but we all wrote in vain—our letters were never noticed. But there was one morning that my son, Thomas Galloway, came into the parlour where I was sitting, with an open letter in his hand, and his face was like the face of death. A trembling seized me all over. I was glad that there was no person beside me, for I saw that something had happened.

'Thomas!' cried I, as I saw the letter shake in his hand, 'is my bairn dead?'

'No,' said he, 'but'——and he stood still and handed me the letter.

I just glanced my eyes on it, and it fell out of my hand. It shewed us that a forgery had been committed upon our house to the extent of ten thousand pounds!—and, oh, horrible!—by my own worthless son-in-law, Charles Austin! It was a dreadful trial—I knew not how to act. If I permitted the villain to escape unpunished, I was doing an injustice to society; and, oh, on the other hand, how was it possible that I could send to the gallows the husband of my own bairn! Thomas posted off instantly to London, to see what could be done; and I broke the bitter tidings in the best manner I could to Rachel and her mother. Their distress was even greater than mine. Thomas returned in a few days, and brought us word that the villain had escaped abroad somewhere; but where he could not learn; and it was supposed he had taken his wife and child with him—for they had an infant about eight months old.

It was not the loss of the money, nor even the manner in which it had been lost, that chiefly affected me, but the loss, the ruin, the disgrace of my bairn. Indeed, it made such an impression upon me, that I never was the same man afterwards in any business transaction. Therefore, about twelve months after this melancholy event, I purchased a property in Dumfriesshire, and Priscilla and myself went to reside upon it. I intrusted the entire business to the prudence and

experience of Thomas Galloway, and became merely a sleeping partner in the firm.

We had been better than a year in our house in Dumfriesshire—it was about the Christmas time, and Thomas and Rachel were down seeing us, with their little son, who was just beginning to run about and climb upon our knees. It was a remarkably cold and gousty night, and a poor wandering woman came to our door, with a bairn at her breast, and another on her back, and begging a morsel, and a shelter for herself and infants. We were all sitting round the fire, when one of the servants came up and told us concerning her, asking if they might give her a seat by the fire. I never liked to harbour beggars, and, says I—

'No: there is a shilling for her; gie her some broken meat, and tell her to go down to the village—it is only two miles.'

'And give her this from me,' said Rachel; and Priscilla had her hand in her pocket, when the lass added—

'Poor creature! I dinna believe she is able to crawl as far as the village, for baith her and her infants seem starving to death.'

'What like is she?' asked Rachel.

'A bonny young creature, Ma'am,' answered our servant. 'but sair, sair dejected.'

She had better be brought in, father,' said my daughter.

'Take her into the kitchen, and let her warm herself and her bairns by the fire,' said Priscilla. And the lass went away down stairs and brought her in.

Well, in the course of half an hour, Rachel went down to the kitchen, to see if there was anything that she could do for the poor woman and her infants—anything that they stood in need of, like—such as a gown, a frock, a pair of shoes, or the like of those things. But the sound of her light footsteps was hardly off the stairs, when we heard a scream, and the exclamations—

'Sister! sister!'

I started to my feet—we all started to our feet; and Priscilla, and Thomas, and myself looked for a moment at each other, in an agony of wonder. We hurried down to the kitchen, and there was my Rachel weeping on the bosom of the poor wandering woman—my lost, my ruined Elizabeth! She sobbed as though her heart would burst, and would have fallen down and embraced our knees; but her mother pressed her to her bosom, and cried—'My bairn! my bairn!'

I took her hand, and, bursting into tears, could only sob—'My poor Betsy!'—and I felt her heart throb, throbbing, as she pressed my hand to her breast.

Rachel again flung her arms around her neck, and took her and her little ones from the kitchen, to clothe them with her own apparel, and that of her child. Poor Priscilla could do nothing but weep; and, when Rachel had clothed her, and cast aside the rags that covered her, she brought her into the parlour, where we sat waiting for them; and her mother and myself again rose and kissed her cheek. and bade her welcome. Throughout the evening, she sat sobbing and weeping, with her face towards the ground, and could not be comforted. We were not in a state of feeling to ask her questions, nor her to answer them.

But, in a few days, she voluntarily unbosomed her griefs to her sister, who communicated to me her tale of wo. It was evident that she knew nothing of the crime which her husband had committed, and we agreed that she should never know, as it would only add a heavier load to her broken spirit. All she knew was, that he had hastened with her to America, where he had changed his name, in consequence, as he said, of a property that had fallen to him in that country. He had long treated her with coolness and neglect, and prohibited her from writing to us, using threats that made her tremble for her life, if she attempted to do so. But, on arriving in America, his indifference gave place to open brutality; and, in a few months, he basely deserted her and her infants in a strange land. She sold the few trinkets and articles of apparel he had left her; and, with her children in her arms, fainting and broken-hearted, slowly performed a journey of several hundred miles, to the nearest seaport, where, after waiting for some months, doling out the little money she had left, to procure food for her children, she, at length, found a vessel about to sail for Greenock; and her passage-money deprived her of her last coin. My poor bairn had been landed in Scotland without a penny in her pocket, and was begging her way to Manchester, to throw herself at our feet, when Providence directed her to our door.

Never do I think of the sufferings which my bairn must at this period have endured, but my heart melts within me, and I think what must have been the tortures of her proud spirit before she could seek assistance from the cold and measured hand of charity. Oh, what a struggle there must have been in her gentle bosom, between the agonies of hunger, the feelings of the mother, and the shame that burned upon her face, and deprived her of utterance!—and while her bits of bairnies clung to her neck, or pulled at her tattered gown, and cried—'Bread, mother, give us bread,' while her own heart was fainting within her, how dreadful must have been the sufferings that my poor Betsy endured. The idea that she was perishing, and begging like a wretched outcast from door to door, while we were faring sumptuously every day, brings the tears to my eyes even to this hour; and often has my heart overflowed in gratitude to the Power that in mercy directed her steps to her father's house.

From that day, she and her children have never left my roof; and she shall still share equally with Rachel. About six months ago, I received a double letter from America. The outer one was from a clergyman, and that which was enclosed, bore the signature of *Charles Austin*. It was his confession on his deathbed, begging my forgiveness, and the forgiveness of his wife—my poor injured Elizabeth—for the wrongs and the cruelties he had committed against her; and declaring that she was ignorant and innocent of the crime he had committed against me. He also beseeched me to provide for his children, for their mother's sake, if they yet lived. It was the letter of a dying penitent. Four thousand of the sum with which he had absconded, he had not squandered, and it he had directed to be restored to me. The letter from the clergyman announced the death and burial of the unhappy young man, and that he had been appointed to carry his dying requests into effect.

I communicated the tidings of his death, and his repentance of his conduct towards her; and she received them meekly, but wept, as the remembrance of young affection touched her heart.

Such, sir, is an account of my speculations, and the losses and crosses with which they have been attended. But success and happiness have predominated; and I must say that I am happier now than ever. And, at the season when Rachel and Thomas come down to see us, with the bairns, and they run romping about with Elizabeth's, who are two interesting creatures, and three or four will be crying at once, 'Granny this, and Granny that,' I believe there is not a happier auld woman in Britain than my Priscilla, who first enabled me to speculate to some purpose."

MIDSIDE MAGGY;
OR,
THE BANNOCK O' TOLLISHILL.

"Every bannock had its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill."
Scottish Provero.

Belike, gentle reader, thou hast often heard the proverb quoted above, that "Every bannock had its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill." The saying hath its origin in a romantic tradition of the Lammermoors, which I shall relate to thee. Tollishill is the name of a sheep-farm in Berwickshire, situated in the parish of Lauder. Formerly, it was divided into three farms, which were occupied by different tenants; and, by way of distinguishing it from the others, that in which dwelt the subjects of our present story was generally called Midside, and our heroine obtained the appellation of Midside Maggy. Tollishill was the property of John, second Earl, and afterwards Duke of Lauderdale—a personage whom I shall more than once, in these tales, have occasion to bring before mine readers, and whose character posterity hath small cause to hold in veneration. Yet it is a black character, indeed, in which there is not to be found one streak of sunshine; and the story of the "Bannock of Tollishill" referreth to such a streak in the history of John, the Lord of Thirlestane.

Time hath numbered somewhat more than a hundred and ninety years since Thomas Hardie became tenant of the principal farm of Tollishill. Now, that the reader may picture Thomas Hardie as he was, and as tradition hath described him, he or she must imagine a tall, strong, and fresh-coloured man of fifty; a few hairs of grey mingling with his brown locks; a countenance expressive of much good nature and some intelligence; while a Lowland bonnet was drawn over his brow. The other parts of his dress were of coarse, grey, homespun cloth, manufactured in Earlston; and across his shoulders, in summer as well as in winter, he wore the mountain plaid. His principles assimilated to those held by the men of the Covenant; but Thomas, though a native of the hills, was not without the worldly prudence which is considered as being more immediately the characteristic of the buying and selling children of society. His landlord was no favourer of the Covenant; and, though Thomas wished well to the cause, he did not see the necessity for making his laird, the Lord of Lauderdale, his enemy for its sake. He, therefore, judged it wise to remain a neutral spectator of the religious and political struggles of the period.

But Thomas was a bachelor. Half a century had he been in the world, and the eyes of no woman had had power to throw a spark into his heart. In his single, solitary state he was happy, or he thought himself happy; and that is much the same thing. But an accident occurred which led him first to believe, and eventually to feel, that he was but a solitary and comfortless moorland farmer, toiling for he knew not what, and laying up treasure he knew not for whom. Yea, and while others had their wives spinning, carding, knitting, and smiling before them, and their bairns running laughing and sporting round about them, he was but a poor deserted creature, with nobody to speak to, nobody to care for, or to care for him. Every person had some object to strive for and to make them strive, but Thomas Hardie; or, to use his own words he was "just in the situation o' a tewhit that has lost its mate—*te-wheet! te-wheet!* it cried, flapping its wings impatiently and forlornly—and *te-wheet! te-wheet!* answered vacant echo frae the dreary glens."

Thomas had been to Morpeth disposing of a part of his hirsels, and he had found a much better market for them than he anticipated. He returned, therefore, with a heavy purse, which generally hath a tendency to create a light and merry heart; and he arrived at Westruther, and went into a hostel, where, three or four times in the year, he was in the habit of spending a cheerful evening with his friends. He had called for a quegh of the landlady's best, and he sat down at his ease with the liquor before him, for he had but a short way to travel. He also pulled out his tobacco-box and his pipe, and began to inhale the fumes of what, up to that period, was almost a forbidden weed. But we question much, if the royal book of James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England, which he published against the use of tobacco, ever found its way into the Lammermoors, though the Indian weed did; therefore, Thomas Hardie sat enjoying his glass and his pipe, unconscious or regardless of the fulminations which he who was king in his boyhood, had published against the latter. But he had not sat long, when a fair maiden, an acquaintance of "mine hostess," entered the hostelry, and began to assist her in the cutting out or fashioning of a crimson kirtle. Her voice fell upon the ear of Thomas like the "music of sweet sounds." He had never heard a voice before that not only fell softly on his ear, but left a lingering murmur in his heart. She, too, was a young thing of not more than eighteen. If ever hair might be called "gowden," it was hers. It was a light and shining bronze, where the prevalence of the golden hue gave a colour to the whole. Her face was a thing of beauty, over which health spread its roseate hue, yet softly, as though the westling winds had caused the leaves of the blushing rose to kiss her cheeks, and leave their delicate hues and impression behind them. She was of a middle stature, and her figure was such, although arrayed in homely garments, as would have commanded the worship of a connoisseur of grace and symmetry. But beyond all that kindled a flame within the hitherto obdurate heart of Thomas, was the witching influence of her smile. For a full hour he sat with his eyes fixed upon her; save at intervals, when he withdrew them to look into the unwonted agitation of his own breast, and examine the cause.

"Amongst the daughters of women," thought he unto himself—for he had a sprinkling of the language of the age about him—"none have I seen so beautiful. Her cheeks bloom bonnier than the heather on Tollishill, and her bosom seems saft as the new-shorn fleece. Her smile is like a blink o' sunshine, and would mak summer to those on whom it fell a' the year round."

He also discovered, for the first time, that "Tollishill was a dull place, especially in the winter season." When, therefore, the fair damsel had arrayed the fashion of the kirtle and departed, without once having seemed to observe Thomas, he said unto the goodwife of the hostelry—"And wha, noo, if it be a fair question, may that bonny lassie be?"

"She is indeed a bonny lassie," answered the landlady, "and a guid lassie, too; and I hae nae doot but, as ye are a single man, Maister Hardie, yer question is fair enough. Her name is Margaret Lylestone, and she is the only bairn o' a puir infirm widow that cam to live here some twa or three years syne. They cam frae south owre some way, and I

am sure they hae seen better days. We thocht at first that the auld woman had been a Catholic; but I suppose that isna the case, though they certainly are baith o' them strong Episcopawlians, and in nae way favourable to the preachers or the word o' the Covenant; but I maun say for Maggy, that she is a bonny, sweet-tempered, and obleegin lassie—though, puir thing, her mother has brocht her up in a wrang way."

Many days had not passed ere Thomas Hardie, arrayed in his Sunday habiliments, paid another visit to Westruther; and he cautiously asked of the goodwife of the hostel many questions concerning Margaret; and, although she jeered him, and said that "Maggy would ne'er think o' a grey-haired carle like him," he brooded over the fond fancy; and, although on this visit he saw her not, he returned to Tollishill, thinking of her as his bride. It was a difficult thing for a man of fifty, who had been the companion of solitude from his youth upwards, and who had lived in single blessedness amidst the silence of the hills, without feeling the workings of the heart, or being subjected to the influence of its passions—I say, it was indeed difficult for such a one to declare, in the ear of a blooming maiden of eighteen, the tale of his first affections. But an opportunity arrived which enabled him to disembosom the burden that pressed upon his heart.

It has been mentioned that Margaret Lylestone and her mother were poor; and the latter, who had long been bowed down with infirmities, was supported by the industry of her daughter. They had also a cow, which was permitted to graze upon the hills without fee or reward; and, with the milk which it produced, and the cheese they manufactured, together with the poor earnings of Margaret, positive want was long kept from them. But the old woman became more and more infirm—the hand of death seemed stretching over her. She required nourishment which Margaret could not procure for her; and, that it might be procured—that her mother might live and not die—the fair maiden sent the cow to Kelso to be sold, from whence the seller was to bring with him the restoratives that her parent required.

Now, it so was that Thomas Hardie, the tenant of Tollishill, was in Kelso market when the cow of Widow Lylestone was offered for sale; and, as it possessed the characteristic marks of a good milcher, he inquired to whom it belonged. On being answered, he turned round for a few moments, and stood thoughtful; but again turning to the individual who had been intrusted to dispose of it, he inquired—

"And wherefore is she selling it?"

"Really, Maister Hardie," replied the other, "I could not positively say, but I hae little doot it is for want—absolute necessity. The auld woman's very frail and very ill—I hae to tak a' sort o' things oot to her the nicht frae the doctor's, after selling the cow, and it's no in the power o' things that her dochter, industrious as she is, should be able to get them for her otherwise."

Thomas again turned aside, and drew his sleeve across his eyes. Having inquired the price sought for the cow, he handed the money to the seller, and gave the animal in charge to one of his herdsmen. He left the market earlier than usual, and directed his servant that the cow should be taken to Westruther.

It was drawing towards gloaming before Thomas approached the habitation of the widow; and, before he could summon courage to enter it for the first time, he sauntered, for several minutes, backward and forward on the moor, by the side of the Blackadder, which there silently wends its way, as a dull and simple burn, through the moss. He felt all the awkwardness of an old man struggling beneath the influence of a young feeling. He thought of what he should say, how he should act, and how he would be received. At length, he had composed a short introductory and explanatory speech which pleased him. He thought it contained both feeling and delicacy (according to his notions of the latter) in their proper proportions, and after repeating it three or four times over by the side of the Blackadder, he proceeded towards the cottage, still repeating it to himself as he went. But, when he raised his hand and knocked at the door, his heart gave a similar knock upon his bosom, as though it mimicked him; and every idea, every word of the introductory speech which he had studied and repeated again and again, short though it was, was knocked from his memory. The door was opened by Margaret, who invited him to enter. She was beautiful as when he first beheld her—he thought more beautiful—for she now spoke to him. Her mother sat in an arm-chair, by the side of the peat fire, and was supported by pillows. He took off his bonnet, and performed an awkward but his best salutation.

"I beg your pardon," said he, hesitatingly, "for the liberty I have taken in calling upon you. But—I was in Kelso the day—and"——He paused, and turned his bonnet once or twice in his hands. "And," he resumed, "I observed, or rather I should say, I learned that ye intended to sell your cow; but, I also heard that ye was very ill, and"——Here he made another pause. "I say I heard that ye was very ill, and I thocht it would be a hardship for ye to part wi' crummie, and especially at a time when ye are sure to stand maist in need o' every help. So I bought the cow—but, as I say, it would be a very great hardship for ye to be without the milk, and what the cheese may bring, at a time like this; and, therefore, I hae ordered her to be brocht back to ye, and ane o' my men will bring her hame presently. Never consider the cow as mine, for a bachelor farmer like me can better afford to want the siller, than ye can to want yer cow; and I micht hae spent it far mair foolishly, and wi' less satisfaction. Indeed, if ye only but think that good I've dune, I'm mair than paid."

"Maister Hardie," said the widow, "what have I, a stranger widow woman, done to deserve this kindness at your hands? Or how is it in the power o' words for me to thank ye? HE who provideth for the widow and the fatherless will not permit you to go unrewarded, though I cannot. O Margaret, hinny," added she, "thank our benefactor as we ought to thank him, for I cannot."

Fair Margaret's thanks were a flood of tears.

"Oh, dinna greet!" said Thomas; "I would ten times owre rather no hae bocht the cow, but hae lost the siller, than I would hae been the cause o' a single tear rowin doun yer bonny cheeks."

'O sir," answered the widow, "but they are tears o' gratitude that distress my bairn, and nae tears are mair precious."

I might tell how Thomas sat down by the peat fire between the widow and her daughter, and how he took the hand of the latter, and entreated her to dry up her tears, saying that his chief happiness would be to be thought their friend, and to deserve their esteem. The cow was brought back to the widow's, and Thomas returned to Tollishill with his herdsman. But, from that night, he became almost a daily visiter at the house of Mrs Lylestone. He provided whatever she required—all that was ordered for her. He spoke not of love to Margaret, but he wooed her through his kindness to her mother. It was, perhaps, the most direct avenue to her affections. Yet, it was not because Thomas thought so that he pursued this course, but because he wanted confidence to make his appeal in a manner more formal or direct.

The widow lingered many months; and all that lay within the power of human means he caused to be done for her, to restore her to health and strength, or at least to smooth her dying pillow. But the last was all that could be done. Where death spreadeth the shadow of his wing, there is no escape from sinking beneath the baneful influence of its shade. Mrs Lylestone, finding that the hour of her departure drew near, took the hand of her benefactor, and when she had thanked him for all the kindness which he had shewn towards her, she added—

"But, O sir, there is one thing that makes the hand of

death heavy. When the sod is cauld upon my breast, who will look after my puir orphan—my bonny faitherless and motherless Margaret? Where will she find a hame?'

"O Mem," said Thomas, "if the like o' me durst say it, she needna hae far to gang, to find a hame and a heart too. Would she only be mine, I would be her protector—a' that I have should be hers."

A gleam of joy brightened in the eyes of the dying widow. 'Margaret!" she exclaimed faintly; and Margaret laid her face upon the bed and wept. "O my bairn! my puir bairn!" continued her mother, "shall I see ye protected and provided for, before I am 'where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest,' which canna be lang noo?"

Thomas groaned—tears glistened in his eyes—he held his breath in suspense. The moment of trial, of condemnation or acquittal, of happiness or misery, had arrived. With an eager impatience, he waited to hear her answer. But Margaret's heart was prepared for his proposal. He had first touched it with gratitude—he had obtained her esteem; and where these sentiments prevail in the bosom of a woman whose affections have not been bestowed upon another, love is not far distant—if it be not between them, and a part of both.

"Did ever I disobey you, mother?" sobbed Margaret, raising her parent's hand to her lips.

"No, my bairn, no!" answered the widow. And raising herself in the bed, she took her daughter's hand and placed it in the hand of Thomas Hardie.

"Oh!" said he, "is this possible? Does my bonny Margaret really consent to mak me the happiest man on earth? Shall I hae a gem at Tollishill that I wadna exchange for a monarch's diadem?"

It is sufficient to say that the young and lovely Margaret Lylestone became Mrs Hardie of Tollishill; or, as she was generally called, "*Midside Maggie.*" Her mother died within three months after their marriage, but died in peace, having, as she said, "seen her dear bairn blessed wi' a leal and a kind guidman, and ane that was weel to do."

For two years after their marriage, and not a happier couple than Thomas and Midside Maggie was to be found on all the long Lammermoors, in the Merse, nor yet in the broad Lothians. They saw the broom and the heather bloom in their season, and they heard the mavis sing before their dwelling; yea, they beheld the snow falling on the mountains, and the drift sweeping down the glens; but while the former delighted, the latter harmed them not, and from all they drew mutual joy and happiness. Thomas said that "Maggy was a matchless wife;" and she that "he was a kind, kind husband."

But the third winter was one of terror among the hills. It was near the new year, the snow began to fall on a Saturday, and when the following Friday came, the storm had not ceased. It was accompanied by frost and a fierce wind, and the drift swept and whirled like awful pillars of alabaster, down the hills, and along the glens—

"Sweeping the flocks and herds."

Fearful was the wrath of the tempest on the Lammermoors. Many farmers suffered severely, but none more severely than Thomas Hardie of Tollishill. Hundreds of his sheep had perished in a single night. He was brought from prosperity to the brink of adversity.

But another winter came round. It commenced with a severity scarce inferior to that which had preceded it, and again scores of his sheep were buried in the snow. But February had not passed, and scarce had the sun entered what is represented as the astronomical sign of the *two fish*, in the heavens, when the genial influence of spring fell with almost summer warmth upon the earth. During the night, the dews came heavily on the ground, and the sun sucked it up in a vapour. But the herbage grew rapidly, and the flocks ate of it greedily, and licked the dew ere the sun rose to dry it up. It brought the murrain amongst them; they died by hundreds; and those that even fattened, but did not die, no man would purchase; or, if purchased, it was only upon the understanding that the money should be returned if the animals were found unsound. These misfortunes were too much for Thomas Hardie. Within two years he found himself a ruined man. But he grieved not for the loss of his flocks, nor yet for his own sake, but for that of his fair young wife, whom he loved as the apple of his eye. Many, when they heard of his misfortunes, said that they were sorry for bonny Midside Maggy.

But, worst of all, the rent-day of Thomas Hardie drew near; and, for the first time since he had held a farm, he was unable to meet his landlord with his money in his hand. Margaret beheld the agony of his spirit, and she knew its cause. She put on her Sunday hood and kirtle; and professing to her husband that she wished to go to Lauder, she took her way to Thirlestane Castle, the residence of their proud landlord, before whom every tenant in arrear trembled. With a shaking hand she knocked at the hall door, and after much perseverance and entreaty, was admitted into the presence of the haughty Earl. She curtsied low before him.

"Well, what want ye, my bonny lass?" said Lauderdale, eyeing her significantly.

"May it please yer Lordship," replied Margaret, "I am the wife o' yer tenant, Thomas Hardie o' Tollishill; an' a guid tenant he has been to yer Lordship for twenty years and mair, as your Lordship maun weel ken."

"He has been my tenant for more than twenty years, say ye?" interrupted Lauderdale; "and ye say ye are his wife: why, looking on thy bonny face, I should say that the heather hasna bloomed twenty times on the knowes o' Tollishill since thy mother bore thee. Yet ye say ye are his wife! Beshrew me, but Thomas Hardie is a man o' taste. Arena ye his daughter?"

"No, my Lord; his first, his only, an' his lawfu' wife—an I would only say, that to ye an' yer faither before ye, for mair than twenty years, he has paid his rent regularly an, faithfully; but the seasons hae visited us sairly, very sairly, for twa years successively, my Lord, an' the drift has destroyed, an' the rot rooted oot oor flocks, sae that we are hardly able to haud up oor heads amang oor neebors, and to meet yer Lordship at yer rent-day is oot o' oor power; therefore hae I come to ye to implore ye that we may hae time to gather oor feet, an' to gie yer Lordship an' every man his due, when it is in oor power."

"Hear me, guidwife," rejoined the Earl; "were I to listen to such stories as yours, I might have every farmer's wife on my estates coming whimpering and whinging, till I was left to shake a purse with naething in't, and allowing others the benefit o' my lands. But it is not every day that a face like yours comes in the shape o' sorrow before me · and, for ae kiss o' your cherry mou', (and ye may take my compliments to your auld man for his taste,) ye shall have a discharge for your half-year's rent, and see if that may set your husband on his feet again."

"Na, yer Lordship, na!" replied Margaret; "it would ill become ony woman in my situation in life, an' especially a married ane, to be daffin wi' sic as yer Lordship. I am the wife o' Thomas Hardie, wha is a guid guidman to me, an' I cam here this day to entreat ye to deal kindly wi him in the day o' his misfortune."

"Troth," replied Lauderdale—who could feel the force of virtue in others, though he did not always practise it in his own person—"I hae heard o' the blossom o' Tollishill before, an' a bonny flower ye are to blossom in an auld man's bower, but I find ye modest as ye are bonny, an' upon one condition will I grant yer request. Ye hae tauld me o' yer hirsels being buried wi' the drift, an that the snaw has covered the May primrose on Leader braes; now it is Martinmas, an' if in June, ye bring me a snowball, not only shall ye be quit o

yer back rent, but ye shall sit free in Tollishill until Martinmas next. But see that in June ye bring me the snowball or the rent."

Margaret made her obeisance before the Earl, and, thanking him, withdrew. But she feared the coming of June; for to raise the rent even then she well knew would be a thing impossible, and she thought also it would be equally so to preserve a snow-ball beneath the melting sun of June. Though young, she had too much prudence and honesty to keep a secret from her husband; it was her maxim, and it was a good one, that "there ought to be no secrets between a man and his wife, which the one would conceal from the other." She therefore told him of her journey to Thirlestane, and of all that had passed between her and the Earl. Thomas kissed her cheek, and called her his "bonny, artless Maggy;" but he had no more hope of seeing a snowball in June than she had, and he said, "the bargain was like the bargain o' a crafty Lauderdale."

Again the winter storms howled upon the Lammermoors, and the snow lay deep upon the hills. Thomas and his herdsmen were busied in exertions to preserve the remainder of his flocks; but, one day, when the westling winds breathed with a thawing influence upon the snow-clad hills, Margaret went forth to where there was a small, deep, and shadowed ravine by the side of the Leader. In it the rivulet formed a pool and seemed to sleep, and there the grey trout loved to lie at ease; for a high dark rock, over which the brushwood grew, overhung it, and the rays of the sun fell not upon it. In the rock, and near the side of the stream, was a deep cavity, and Margaret formed a snowball on the brae top, and she rolled it slowly down into the shadowed glen, till it attained the magnitude of an avalanche in miniature. She trode upon it, and pressed it firmly together, until it obtained almost the hardness and consistency of ice. She rolled it far into the cavity, and blocked up the mouth of the aperture, so that neither light nor air might penetrate the strange coffer in which she had deposited the equally strange rent of Tollishill. Verily, common as ice-houses are in our day, let not Midside Maggy be deprived of the merit of their invention.

I have said that it was her maxim to keep no secret from her husband; but, as it is said there is no rule without an exception, even so it was in the case of Margaret, and there was one secret which she communicated not to Thomas, and that was—the secret of the hidden snowball.

But June came, and Thomas Hardie was a sorrowful man. He had in no measure overcome the calamities of former seasons, and he was still unprepared with his rent. Margaret shared not his sorrow, but strove to cheer him, and said—

"We shall hae a snawba' in June, though I climb to the top o' Cheviot for it."

"O my bonny lassie," replied he—and he could see the summit of Cheviot from his farm—"dinna deceive yersel' wi' what could only be words spoken in jest; but, at ony rate, I perceive there has been nae snaw on Cheviot for a month past."

Now, not a week had passed, but Margaret had visited the aperture in the ravine, where the snowball was concealed, not through idle curiosity, to perceive whether it had melted away, but more effectually to stop up every crevice that might have been made in the materials with which she had blocked up the mouth of the cavity.

But the third day of the dreadful month had not passed, when a messenger arrived at Tollishill from Thirlestane with the abrupt mandate—"*June has come!*"

"And we shall be at Thirlestane the morn," answered Margaret.

"O my doo," said Thomas, "what nonsense are ye talking!—that isna like ye, Margaret; I'll be in Greenlaw Jail the morn; and oor bits o' things in the hoose, and oor flocks, will be seized by the harpies o' the law—and the only thing that distresses me is, what is to come o' you, hinny."

"Dinna dree the death ye'll never dee," said Margaret, affectionately; "we shall see, if we be spared, what the morn will bring."

"The fortitude o' yer mind, Margaret," said Thomas, taking her hand; and he intended to have said more, to have finished a sentence in admiration of her worth, but his heart filled, and he was silent.

On the following morning, Margaret said unto him—

"Now, Thomas, if ye are ready, we'll gang to Thirlestane. It is aye waur to expect or think o' an evil than to face it."

"Margaret, dear," said he, "I canna comprehend ye—wherefore should I thrust my head into the lion's den? It will soon enough seek me in my path."

Nevertheless, she said unto him "Come," and bade him to be of good heart; and he rose and accompanied her. But she conducted him to the deep ravine, where the waters seem to sleep, and no sunbeam ever falls; and, as she removed the earth and the stones, with which she had blocked up the mouth of the cavity in the rock, he stood wondering. She entered the aperture, and rolled forth the firm mass of snow, which was yet too large to be lifted by hands. When Thomas saw this, he smiled and wept at the same instant, and he pressed his wife's cheek to his bosom, and said—

"Great has been the care o' my poor Margaret, but it is o' no avail; for, though ye hae proved mair than a match for the seasons, the proposal was but a jest o' Lauderdale."

"What is a man but his word?" replied Margaret; "and him a nobleman too."

"Nobility are but men," answered Thomas, "and seldom better men than ither folk. Believe me, if we were to gang afore him wi' a snawba' in oor hands, we should only get lauched at for our pains."

"It was his ain agreement," added she; "and, at ony rate, we can be naething the waur for seeing if he will abide by it."

Breaking the snowy mass, she rolled up a portion of it in a napkin, and they went towards Thirlestane together; though often did Thomas stop by the way and say—

"Margaret, dear, I'm perfectly ashamed to gang upon this business; as sure as I am standing here, as I have tauld ye, we will only get oorselves lauched at."

"I would rather be lauched at," added she, "than despised for breaking my word; and, if oor laird break his noo, wha wadna despise him?"

Harmonious as their wedded life had hitherto been, there was what might well nigh be called bickerings between them on the road; for Thomas felt or believed that she was leading him on a fool's errand. But they arrived at the castle of Thirlestane, and were ushered into the mansion of its proud lord.

"Ha!" said the Earl, as they entered, "bonny Midside Maggy and her auld goodman! Well, what bring ye?—the rents o' Tollishill, or their equivalent?" Thomas looked at his young wife, for he saw nothing to give him hope on the countenance of Lauderdale, and he thought that he pronounced the word "*equivalent*" with a sneer.

"I bring ye snaw in June, my Lord," replied Margaret, "agreeably to the terms o' yer bargain; and am sorry, for your sake and oors, that it hasna yet been in oor power to bring gowd instead o't."

Loud laughed the Earl as Margaret unrolled the huge snowball before him; and Thomas thought unto himself, "I said how it would be." But Lauderdale, calling for his writing materials, sat down and wrote, and he placed in the hands of Thomas a discharge, not only for his back rent, but for all that should otherwise be due at the ensuing Martinmas.

Thomas Hardie bowed and bowed again before the Earl, low and yet lower, awkwardly and still more awkwardly, and he endeavoured to thank him, but his tongue faltered

in the performance of its office. He could have taken his hand in his and wrung it fervently, leaving his fingers to express what his tongue could not; but his laird was an Earl, and there was a necessary distance to be observed between an Earl and a Lammermoor farmer.

"Thank not me, goodman," said Lauderdale, "but thank the modesty and discretion o' yer winsome wife."

Margaret was silent; but gratitude for the kindness which the Earl had shewn unto her husband and herself, took deep root in her heart. Gratitude, indeed, formed the predominating principle in her character, and fitted her even for acts of heroism.

The unexpected and unwonted generosity of the Earl had enabled Thomas Hardie to overcome the losses with which the fury of the seasons had overwhelmed him, and he prospered beyond any farmer on the hills. But, while he prospered, the Earl of Lauderdale, in his turn, was overtaken by adversity. The stormy times of the civil wars raged, and it is well known with what devotedness Lauderdale followed the fortunes of the King. When the Commonwealth began, he was made prisoner, conveyed to London, and confined in the Tower. There nine weary years of captivity crept slowly and gloomily over him; but they neither taught him mercy to others nor to moderate his ambition, as was manifested when power and prosperity again cast their beams upon him. But he now lingered in the Tower, without prospect or hope of release, living upon the bare sustenance of a prisoner, while his tenants dwelt on his estates, and did as they pleased with his rents, as though they should not again behold the face of a landlord.

But Midside Maggy grieved for the fate of him whose generosity had brought prosperity, such as they had never known before, to herself and to her husband; and in the fulness of her gratitude she was ever planning schemes for his deliverance; and she urged upon her husband that it was their duty to attempt to deliver their benefactor from captivity, as he had delivered them from the iron grasp of ruin, when misfortune lay heavily on them. Now, as duly as the rent-day came, from the Martinmas to which the snowball had been his discharge, Thomas Hardie faithfully and punctually locked away his rent to the last farthing, that he might deliver it into the hands of his laird, should he again be permitted to claim his own; but he saw not in what way they could attempt his deliverance, as his wife proposed.

"Thomas," said she, "there are ten lang years o' rent due, and we hae the siller locked away. It is o' nae use to us, for it isna oors; but it may be o' use to him. It would enable him to fare better in his prison, and maybe to put a handfu o' gowd into the hands o' his keepers, and thereby to escape abroad, and it wad furnish him wi' the means o' living when he was abroad. Remember his kindness to us, and think that there is nae sin equal to the sin o' ingratitude."

"But," added Thomas, "in what way could we get the money to him? for, if we were to send it, it would never reach him, and, as a prisoner, he wouldna be allooed to receive it."

"Let us tak it to him oorsels, then," said Margaret.

"Tak it oorsels!" exclaimed Thomas, in amazement, "a' the way to London! It is oot o' the question a'thegither, Margaret. We wad be robbed o' every plack before we got half-way; or, if we were even there, hoo, in a' the world, do ye think we could get it to him, or that we would be allooed to see him?"

"Leave that to me," was her reply; "only say ye will gang, and a' that shall be accomplished. There is nae obstacle in the way but the want o' yer consent. But the debt, and the ingratitude o' it thegither, hang heavy upon my heart."

Thomas at length yielded to the importunities of his wife, and agreed that they should make a pilgrimage to London, to pay his rent to his captive laird; though how they were to carry the gold in safety, through an unsettled country, a distance of more than three hundred miles, was a difficulty he could not overcome. But Margaret removed his fears; she desired him to count out the gold, and place it before her and when he had done so, she went to the meal-tub and took out a quantity of pease and of barley meal mixed, sufficient to knead a goodly fadge or bannock; and, when she had kneaded it, and rolled it out, she took the golden pieces and pressed them into the paste of the embryo bannock, and again she doubled it together, and again rolled it out, and kneaded into it the remainder of the gold. She then fashioned it into a thick bannock, and placing it on the hearth, covered it with the red ashes of the peats.

Thomas sat marvelling, as the formation of the singular purse proceeded, and when he beheld the operation completed, and the bannock placed upon the hearth to bake, he only exclaimed—"Weel, woman's ingenuity dings a'! I wadna hae thocht o' the like o' that, had I lived a thoosand years! O Margaret, hinny, but ye are a strange ane."

"Hoots," replied she, "I'm sure ye micht easily hae imagined that it was the safest plan we could hae thocht upon to carry the siller in safety; for I am sure there isna a thief between the Tweed and Lon'on toun, that would covet or carry awa a bear bannock."

"Troth, my doo, and I believe ye're richt," replied Thomas; "but wha could hae thocht o' sic an expedient? Sure there never was a bannock baked like the bannock o' Tollishill."

On the third day after this, an old man and a fair lad, before the sun had yet risen, were observed crossing the English Border. They alternately carried a wallet across their shoulders, which contained a few articles of apparel and a bannock. They were dressed as shepherds, and passengers turned and gazed on them as they passed along; for the beauty of the youth's countenance excited their admiration. Never had Lowland bonnet covered so fair a brow The elder stranger was Thomas Hardie, and the youth none other than his Midside Maggy.

I will not follow them through the stages of their long and weary journey, nor dwell upon the perils and adventures they encountered by the way. But, on the third week after they had left Tollishill, and when they were beyond the town called Stevenage, and almost within sight of the metropolis, they were met by an elderly military-looking man who, struck with the lovely countenance of the seeming youth, their dress, and way-worn appearance, accosted them, saying—"Good morrow, strangers; ye seem to have travelled far. Is this fair youth your son, old man?"

"He is a gay sib freend," answered Thomas.

"And whence come ye?" continued the stranger.

"Frae Leader Haughs, on the bonny Borders o' the north countrie," replied Margaret.

"And whence go ye?" resumed the other.

"First, tell me wha ye may be that are sae inquisitive," interrupted Thomas, in a tone which betrayed something like impatience.

"Some call me George Monk," replied the stranger mildly; "others, Honest George. I am a general in the Parliamentary army." Thomas reverentially raised his hand to his bonnet, and bowed his head.

"Then pardon me, sir," added Margaret, "and if ye indeed be the guid and gallant general, sma' offence will ye tak at onything that may be said amiss by a country laddie. We are tenants o' the Lord o' Lauderdale, whom ye now keep in captivity; and, though we mayna think as he thinks, yet we never faund him but a guid landlord; and little guid, in my opinion, it can do to onybody to keep him, as he has been noo for nine years, caged up like a bird. Therefore, though oor ain business that has brocht us up to London should fail, I winna regret the journey, since it has afforded me an opportunity o' seein yer Excellency, and soliciting yer interest, which maun be pooerfu, in behalf o' oor laird, and that ye would release him frae his prison, and, if he

michtna remain in this country, obtain permission for him to gang abroad."

"Ye plead fairly and honestly for yer laird, fair youth," returned the general; "yet, though he is no man to be trusted, I needs say he hath had his portion of captivity measured out abundantly; and, since ye have minded me of him, ere a week go round I will think of what may be done for Lauderdale." Other questions were asked and answered—some truly, and some evasively; and Thomas and Margaret, blessing Honest George in their hearts, went on their way rejoicing at having met him.

On arriving in London, she laid aside the shepherd's garb in which she had journeyed, and resumed her wonted apparel. On the second day after their arrival, she went out upon Tower-hill, dressed as a Scottish peasant girl, with a basket on her arm; and in the basket were a few ballads, and the bannock of Tollishill. She affected silliness, and, acting the part of a wandering minstrel, went singing her ballads towards the gate of the Tower. Thomas followed her at a distance. Her appearance interested the guard; and as she stood singing before the gate—"What want ye, pretty face?" inquired the officer of the guard. "Your alms, if ye please," said she, smiling innocently, "and to sing a bonny Scotch sang to the Laird o' Lauderdale."

The officer and the sentinels laughed; and, after she had sung them another song or two, she was permitted to enter the gate, and a soldier pointed out to her the room in which Lauderdale was confined. On arriving before the grated windows of his prison, she raised her eyes towards them, and began to sing "*Leader Haughs.*" The wild, sweet melody of his native land, drew Lauderdale to the windows of his prison-house, and in the countenance of the minstrel he remembered the lovely features of Midside Maggy. He requested permission of the keeper that she should be admitted to his presence; and his request was complied with.

"Bless thee, sweet face!" said the Earl, as she was admitted into his prison; "and you have not forgotten the snowball in June?" And he took her hand to raise it to his lips.

"Hooly, hooly, my guid Lord," said she, withdrawing her hand; "my fingers were made for nae sic purpose—Thomas Hardie is here"—and she laid her hand upon her fair bosom—"though now standing without the yett o' the Tower." Lauderdale again wondered, and, with a look of mingled curiosity and confusion, inquired—"Wherefore do ye come—and why do ye seek me?" "I brocht ye a snaw-ba' before," said she, "for yer rent—I bring ye a bannock noo." And she took the bannock from the basket and placed it before him. "Woman," added he, "are ye really as demented as I thocht ye but feigned to be, when ye sang before the window?" "The proof o' the bannock," replied Margaret, "will be in the breakin' o't."

"Then, goodwife, it will not be easily proved," said he—and he took the bannock, and with some difficulty broke it over his knee; but, when he beheld the golden coins that were kneaded through it, for the first, perhaps the last and only time in his existence, the Earl of Lauderdale burst into tears, and exclaimed—"Well, every bannock has its maik, but the bannock o' Tollishill! Yet, kind as ye hae been, the gold is useless to ane that groans in hopeless captivity."

"Yours has been a long captivity," said Margaret; "but it is not hopeless; and, if honest General Monk is to be trusted, from what he tauld me not three days by-gane, before a week gae roond, ye will be at liberty to go abroad, and there the bannock o' Tollishill may be o' use."

The wonder of Lauderdale increased, and he replied—

Monk will keep his word—but what mean ye of him?"

And she related to him the interview they had had with the General by the way. Lauderdale took her hand, a ray of hope and joy spread over his face, and he added—

"Never shall ye rue the baain o' the bannock, if auld times come back again."

Margaret left the Tower, singing as she had entered it, and joined her husband, whom she found leaning over the railing around the moat, and anxiously waiting her return. They spent a few days more in London, to rest and to gaze upon its wonders, and again set out upon their journey to Tollishill. General Monk remembered his promise; within a week, the Earl of Lauderdale was liberated, with permission to go abroad, and there, as Margaret had intimated, he found the bannock of Tollishill of service.

A few more years passed round, during which old Thomas Hardie still prospered; but, during those years, the Commonwealth came to an end, the King was recalled, and with him, as one of his chief favourites, returned the Earl of Lauderdale. And, when he arrived in Scotland, clothed with power whatever else he forgot, he remembered the bannock of Tollishill. Arrayed in what might have passed as royal state, and attended by fifty of his followers, he rode in princely pomp to the dwelling of Thomas Hardie and Midside Maggy; and when they came forth to meet him, he dismounted, and drew forth a costly silver girdle of strange workmanship, and fastened it round her jimp waist, saying—

"Wear this, for now it is my turn to be grateful; and for your husband's life, and your life, and the life of the generation after ye," (for they had children,) "ye shall sit rent free on the lands ye now farm. For, truly, every bannock had its maik but the bannock o' Tollishill."

Thomas and Margaret felt their hearts too full to express their thanks; and, ere they could speak, the Earl, mounting his horse, rode towards Thirlestane; and his followers, waving their bonnets, shouted—"Long live Midside Maggy, queen of Tollishill."

Such is the story of "The Bannock o' Tollishill;" and it is only necessary to add, for the information of the curious, that I believe the silver girdle may be seen until this day in the neighbourhood of Tollishill, and in the possession of a descendant of Midside Maggy, to whom it was given.

THE SABBATH WRECKS.

A LEGEND OF DUNBAR.

It was a beautiful Sabbath morning in the autumn of 1577: a few small clouds, tinged with red, sailed slowly through the blue heavens; the sun shone brightly, as it conscious of the glory and goodness of its Maker, diffusing around a holy stillness and tranquillity, characteristic of the day of rest; the majestic Frith flashed back the sunbeams, while, on its bosom, slowly glided the winged granaries of commerce; there, too, lay its islands, glorying in their strength—the May, shrouded in light, appeared as a leviathan sunning in its rays—and the giant Bass, covered with seafowl, rose as a proud mountain of alabaster in the midst of the waters. A thousand boats lay along the shores of Dunbar. It was the herring-season—and there were many boats from the south and from the north, and also from the coast of Holland.

Now, tidings were brought to the fishermen that an immense shoal was upon the coast; and, regardless of its being Sabbath morning, they began to prepare their thousand boats, and to go out to set their nets. The Rev. Andrew Simpson, a man possessed of the piety and boldness of an apostle, was then minister of Dunbar; and, as he went forth to the kirk to preach to his people, he beheld the unhallowed preparations of the fishermen on the beach; and he turned and went amongst them, and reproved them sternly for their great wickedness. But the men were obdurate—the prospect of great gain was before them, and they mocked the words of the preacher. Yea, some of them said unto him, in the words of the children to the prophet—"Go up, thou bald head." He went from boat to boat, counselling, entreating, expostulating with them, and praying for them

"Surely," said he, "the Lord of the Sabbath will not hold ye guiltless for this profanation of his holy day." But, at that period, vital religion was but little felt or understood upon the Borders, and they regarded not his words.

He went to one boat, which was the property of members of his own congregation, and there he found Agnes Crawford, the daughter of one of his elders, hanging upon the neck of her husband, and their three children also clung around him, and they entreated him not to be guilty of breaking the Sabbath for the sake of perishing gain. But he regarded not their voice; and he kissed his wife and his children, while he laughed at their idle fears. Mr Simpson beheld the scene with emotion, and approaching the group—'John Crawford," he exclaimed, addressing the husband, "you may profess to mock, to laugh to scorn the words of a feeble woman; but see that they return not like a consuming fire into your bosom when hope has departed. Is not the Lord of the Sabbath the Creator of the sea as well as of the dry land? Know ye not that ye are now braving the wrath of Him before whom the mighty ocean is a drop, and all space but a span? Will ye, then, glory in insulting His ordinances, and delight in profaning the day of holiness? Will ye draw down everlasting darkness on the Sabbath of your soul? When ye were but a youth, ye have listened to the words of John Knox—the great apostle of our country—ye have trembled beneath their power, and the conviction that they carried with them; and when ye think of those convictions, and contrast them with your conduct this day, does not the word *apostate* burn in your heart? John Crawford, some of your blood have embraced the stake for the sake of the truth, and will ye profane the Sabbath which they sanctified? The Scotsman who openly glories in such a sin, forfeits his claim to the name of one, and publishes to the world that he has no part or communion with the land that gave him birth. John Crawford, hearken unto my voice, to the voice of your wife, and that of your bairns, (whose bringing up is a credit to their mother,) and be not guilty of this gross sin." But the fisherman, while he regarded not the supplications of his wife, became sullen at the words of the preacher, and, springing into the boat, seized an oar, and, with his comrades, began to pull from the shore.

The thousand boats put to sea, and Mr Simpson returned sorrowful from the beach to the kirk, while Agnes Crawford and her children followed him. That day he took for his text, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy;" and, as he fearlessly and fervidly denounced the crime of Sabbath-breaking, and alluded to the impious proceedings of the day, his hearers trembled, but poor Agnes wept aloud, and her children clung around her, and they wept also, because she wept. But, ere the service had concluded, the heavens began to lower. Darkness fell over the congregation—and first came the murmur of the storm, which suddenly burst into the wild howl of the tempest. They gazed upon each other in silent terror, like guilty spirits stricken in their first rebellion by the searching glance of the Omniscient. The loud voice of Psalms was abruptly hushed, and its echo mingled with the dreadful music of the elements, like the bleating of a tender lamb, in the wind that sweepeth howling on the mountains. For a moment, their features, convulsed and immovable, were still distended with the song of praise; but every tongue was silent, every eye fixed. There was no voice, save heaven's. The church seemed to rock to its foundations, but none fled—none moved. Pale, powerless as marble statues, horror transfixed them in the house of prayer. The steeple rocked in the blast, and, as it bent, a knell, untolled by human hands, pealed on the ears of the breathless multitude. A crash followed. The spire that glittered in the morning sun lay scattered in fragments, and the full voice of the whirlwind roared through the aisles. The trees crouched and were stripped leafless; and the sturdy oak, whose roots had embraced the earth for centuries, torn from the deep darkness of its foundations, was uplifted on the wings of the tempest. Darkness was spread over the earth. Lightnings gathered together their terrors, and, clothed in the fury of their fearful majesty, flashed through the air. The fierce hail was poured down as clouds of ice. At the awful voice of the deep thunder, the whirlwind quailed, and the rage of the tempest seemed spent.

Nothing was now heard save the rage of the troubled sea, which, lashed into foam by the angry storm, still bellowed forth its white billows to the clouds, and shouted its defiance loud as the war-cry of embattled worlds. The congregation still sat mute, horrified, death-like, as if waiting for the preacher to break the spell of the elements. He rose to return thanks for their preservation, and he had given out the lines—

> "Lord, in thy wrath rebuke me not,
> Nor in thy hot rage chasten me,"

when the screams and the howling of women and children rushing wildly along the streets, rendered his voice inaudible. The congregation rose, and hurrying one upon another, they rushed from the church. The exhortations of the preacher to depart calmly were unheard and unheeded. Every seat was deserted, all rushed to the shore, and Agnes Crawford and her children ran, also, in terror, with the multitude.

The wrecks of nearly two hundred boats were drifting among the rocks. The dead were strewed along the beach, and amongst them, wailing widows sought their husbands, children their fathers, mothers their sons, and all their kindred; and ever and anon an additional scream of grief arose as the lifeless body of one or other such relations was found. A few of the lifeless bodies of the hardy crews were seen tossing to and fro; but the cry for help was hushed, and the yell of death was heard no more.

It was, in truth, a fearful day—a day of lamentation, of warning, and of judgment. In one hour, and within sight of the beach, a hundred and ninety boats and their crews were whelmed in the mighty deep; and, dwelling on the shore between Spittal and North Berwick, two hundred and eighty widows wept their husbands lost.

The spectators were busied carrying the dead, as they were driven on shore, beyond the reach of tide-mark. They had continued their melancholy task for near an hour, when a voice exclaimed—"See! see!—one still lives, and struggles to make the shore!"

All rushed to the spot from whence the voice proceeded, and a young man was perceived, with more than mortal strength, yet labouring in the whirling waves. His countenance was black with despair. His heart panted with suffocating pangs. His limbs buffeted the billows in the strong agony of death, and he strained, with desperate eagerness, towards the projecting point of a black rock. It was now within his grasp, but, in its stead, he clutched the deceitful wave that laughed at his deliverance. He was whirled around it, dashed on it with violence, and again swept back by the relentless surge. He threw out his arms at random, and his deep groans and panting breath were heard through the sea's hoarse voice. He again reached the rock—he grasped, he clung to its tangled sides. A murmur moaned through the multitude. They gazed one upon another. His glazed eyes frowned darkly upon them. Supplication and scorn were mingled in his look. His lips moved, but his tongue uttered no sound. He only gasped to speak—to implore assistance. His strength gave way—the waters rushed around the rock as a whirlpool. He was again uplifted upon the white bosom of the foam, and tossed within a few yards of the wailing but unavailing crowd.

"It is John Crawford!" exclaimed those who were enabled to recognise his features. A loud shriek followed the mention of his name—a female rushed through the crowd, and the next moment the delicate form of Agnes Crawford was seen floating on the wild sea. In an instant, a hundred

plunged to her rescue; but, before the scream of horror and surprise raised by the spectators when they beheld her devoted but desperate purpose, had subsided, she was beyond the reach of all who feared death. Although no feminine amusement, Agnes had delighted in buffeting the waters from a child, as though she felt a home upon their bosom; and now the strength of inspiration seemed to thrill through her frame. She was hidden from the gaze of the marvelling spectators, and a deep groan crept along the shore. She again appeared, and her fair hand grasped the shoulder of the drowning man! A shout of wild joy rang back on the deserted town. Her father, who was amongst the multitude, fell upon his knees. He clasped his hands together—"Merciful Heaven!" he exclaimed, "Thou who stillest the tempest, and holdest the waters in the hollow of Thy hand, protect—protect my child!"

The waters rioted with redoubled fury. Her strength seemed failing, but a smile of hope still lighted up her features, and her hand yet grasped her apparently lifeless burden. Despair again brooded on the countenances of her friends. For a moment, she disappeared amongst the waves; but the next, Agnes Crawford lay senseless on the beach, her arm resting on the bosom of him she had snatched from a watery grave—on the bosom of her husband.

They were borne to their own house, where, in a few minutes, she recovered; but her husband manifested no sign of vitality. All the means within their power, and that they knew, were resorted to, in order to effect his resuscitation. Long and anxiously she wept over him, rubbing his temples and his bosom, and, at length, beneath her hand his breast first began to heave with the returning pulsation of his heart.

"He lives!—he breathes!" she exclaimed, and she sank back in a state of unconsciousness, and was carried from the room. The preacher attended by the bedside, where the unconscious fisherman lay, directing and assisting in the operations necessary for restoring animation.

As John Crawford began to recover, the film of death that had gathered over his eyes began to melt away, and he gazed around in bewilderment, but unconscious of where he was, and he sank into a troubled sleep; and, as he so slept, and his strength returned, he cast forth his arms, in imagination yet grappling with death. He dreamed, and in his dream he shouted for help. He prayed, and in the same breath he blasphemed and reviled the trembling spectators that his troubled fancy still pictured on the beach.

In a few hours the fisherman awoke from his troubled sleep, which many expected would have been the sleep of death. He raised himself in the bed—he looked around wistfully. Agnes, who had recovered, and returned to the room, fell upon his bosom. "My Agnes!—my poor Agnes!" he cried, gazing wistfully in her face—"but, where—where am I?—and my bairnies, where are they?"

"Here, faither, here!" cried the children, stretching out their little arms to embrace him.

Again he looked anxiously around. A recollection of the past, and a consciousness of the present, fell upon his mind. "Thank God!" he exclaimed, and burst into tears; and when his troubled soul and his agitated bosom had found in them relief, he inquired, eagerly—"But, oh, tell me, how was I saved?—was I cast upon the beach? There is a confused remembrance in my brain, as though an angel grasped me when I was sinking, and held me. But my head is confused, it is fearfully confused, and I remember naething but as a dream; save the bursting awa o' the dreadful storm, wi' the perishing o' hunders in an instant, and the awfu cry that rang frae boat to boat—'A judgment has come owre us!' And it was a judgment indeed! O Agnes! had I listened to ver words, to the prayers o' my bits o' bairns, or the advice o' the minister, I wad hae escaped the sin that I hae this day committed, and the horrors wi' which it has been visited. But tell me how, or in what manner, I was saved?"

"John," said the aged elder, the father of Agnes, "ye was saved by the merciful and sustaining power o' that Providence which ye this morning set at nought. But I rejoice to find that your heart is not hardened, and that the awful visitation—the judgment, as ye hae weel described it—which has this day filled our coast with widows and with orphans, has not fallen upon you in vain; for ye acknowledge your guilt, and are grateful for your deliverance. Your being saved is naething short o' a miracle. We a' beheld how long and how desperately ye struggled wi' the raging waves, when we knew not who you were, and when it wasna in the power o' ony being upon the shore to render ye the slightest assistance. We saw how ye struggled to reach the black rock, and how ye was swept round it; and, when ye at last reached it, we observed how ye clung to it wi the grasp o' death, until your strength gave way, and the waves dashed you from it. Then ye was driven towards the beach, and some of the spectators recognised your face, and they cried out your name! A scream burst upon my ear—a woman rushed through the crowd—and then, John.—oh, then!"——But here the feelings of the old man overpowered him. He sobbed aloud, and pausing for a few moments, added—"Tell him, some o' ye." "Oh, tell me," said the fisherman; "a' that my faither-in-law has said, I kenned before. But how was I saved?—or by whom?"

The preacher took up the tale. "Hearken unto me, John Crawford," said he. "Ye have reason, this day to sorrow, and to rejoice, and to be grateful beyond measure. In the morning, ye mocked my counsel and set at nought my reproof. True, it was not the speaker, but the words of truth that were spoken, that ye ought to have regarded—for they were not my words, and I was but the humble instrument to convey them to ye. But ye despised them; and as ye sowed so have ye reaped. But, as your faither-in-law has told ye, when your face was recognised from the shore, and your name mentioned, a woman screamed—she rushed through the multitude—she plunged into the boiling sea, and in an instant she was beyond the reach of help!"

"Speak!—speak on!" cried the fisherman eagerly; and he placed his hands on his heaving bosom, and gazed anxiously, now towards the preacher, and again towards his Agnes, who wept upon his shoulder.

"The Providence that had till then sustained you, while your fellow creatures perished around you," added the clergyman, "supported her. She reached you—she grasped your arm. After long struggling, she brought you within a few yards of the shore; a wave overwhelmed you both and cast you upon the beach, with her arm—the arm of your wife that saved you—upon your bosom!"

"Gracious Heaven!" exclaimed the fisherman, pressing his wife to his bosom—"my ain Agnes!—was it you?—was it you?—my wife!—my saviour!" And he wept aloud, and his children wept also. "There is nae merit in what I've dune," replied she, "for wha should have attempted to save ye, had I no! Ye were everything to me, John, and to our bairns."

But the feelings of the wife and the mother were too strong for words. I will not dwell upon the joy and gratitude of the family to whom the husband and the father had been restored as from the dead. It found a sorrowful contrast in the voice of lamentation and of mourning, which echoed along the coast like the peal of an alarm-bell. The dead were laid in heaps upon the beach, and, on the following day, widows, orphans, parents, and brothers, came from all the fishing-towns along the coast, to seek their dead amongst the drowned that had been gathered together; or, if they found them not, they wandered along the shore to seek for them where the sea might have cast them forth. Such is the tale of the Sabbath wrecks—of the lost drave of Dunbar.



THE SABBATH WRECKS.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS,

AND OF SCOTLAND.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

READER, if ever thou hast been in "Babylon the Great," or, in other words, in the overgrown metropolis of the southern portion of these kingdoms, peradventure you have observed melancholy-looking men, their countenances tinged with the "pale cast of thought," in suits of well-worn black, "a world too wide," creeping, edging, or shuffling along the streets, each belike with a bundle of papers peering from his pocket. In nine cases out of ten, these neglected-looking men are the poor scholars who instruct or amuse the world. You may also find them, with anxiety in their eyes, and hunger sitting at home upon their cheeks, wandering in the most secluded corners of the parks, enjoying, by way of a substitute for dinner, the apology which the air in the parks offers for the pure and unadulterated breath of heaven. Daily, too, they may be seen in the library of the Museum, poring over an old volume, and concealing their shoes beneath the table, lest they should 'prate" of the scholars' "whereabouts," and ask of the venerable volume—"Are you or we oldest?" Or you may find them in a corner of some obscure coffee-house, poring intently over the periodicals of the day, at intervals slowly sipping and mincing the cup of coffee and half slice of bread before them. But, in speaking of poor scholars generally, I keep you from the tale of our Poor Scholar.

You have heard of Longtown, which is a neat, respectable-looking, and remarkably clean little town, in Cumberland, on the banks of the Esk, near to what is called Solway Moss, and sometimes spoken of as the first or last town in England, in the same manner as Coldstream is mentioned as the first or last town in Scotland. Well, there dwelt in Longtown a respectable widow, named Musgrave. She derived an income of about eighty pounds a-year from a property that had been bequeathed to her in the West Indies. She had an only son, whose name was Robert, and who, after a respectable education in his native place, was bound as an apprentice to a medical practitioner in Carlisle. He afterwards attended the classes in Edinburgh; but, before he had taken out all the necessary tickets, and before he had obtained the diploma or qualification which was to enable him to use the word "Surgeon" after his name, something went wrong about the property that was bequeathed to his mother in the West Indies, her remittances ceased, and, after a tedious law-suit, it was swallowed up altogether.

She was left in poverty—in utter destitution. The misfortune fell upon her heavily; she drooped, pined, mourned, and died; and Robert Musgrave, still under twenty, was left without money and without friends. His talents, however, had excited the notice of several of the professors under whom he had studied; and they, acquiring a knowledge of his circumstances, and feeling an interest in his fate, enabled him to take out his certificate as a member of the college of surgeons.

He now, with high hopes, and, I need not say, a low pocket, commenced practice as a country surgeon in a small village on the Borders. It was a young man's dream. A surgeon in a country village, and especially a young one, is generally the worst paid man in it. The war between poverty and the necessity of appearing respectable never ceases. The clergyman, be he churchman or dissenter, has a certain income, be it less or more; but the surgeon lives between the hand and the mouth; and he can hardly, considering his avocation, in Christian benevolence, pray for "daily bread." Such a prayer would be something akin to a grave-digger's for an east wind or a "green Christmas," which, as the adage hath it, "maketh a fat kirkyard."

Now, Robert Musgrave was a young man possessed not only of what may be called talent, but what is more, of strong and ardent genius; while, young as he was, his professional skill would have done honour to a court physician. But, buried in the obscurity of a poor and secluded village, struggling between gentility and penury, shut out from all society congenial to his taste, education, and former habits, he became heartless and callous, if not slovenly; and, eventually, he sank into a sceptic from the *force of appearance*. For, be assured, gentle reader, if ye will study mankind closely, and examine into their outgoings and their incomings, and think of the *why* for every *wherefore*, ye will find that the reasoning of a shabby coat produces more converts to every-day freethinking or infidelity, than the philosophy of Hobbes, the rhetoric of Shaftsbury, the wit of Voltaire, the sophistry of Hume, and the blackguard ribaldry of Paine, united. The neighbouring farmers admitted Doctor Musgrave, as they called him, to be clever; but they despised his poverty, and invited him to their tables only for amusement. Deprived of books, and without society, while his temperament was framed for both, and feeling himself slighted, he gradually lost his respectability and became a tippler, if not a drunkard.

I shall here follow out a portion of his history, in a conversation which he had with a Cumberland farmer, one Peter Liddell, whom he met in London about three years after he had left his country practice on the Borders:—

"The longer I remained in ——," said he, "my situation became the more painful. I felt I was becoming something less than the equal of society I despised. I found that I had gradually sunk into the odious vice of drunkenness; that I was the companion only of the ignorant and the worthless; and poverty, eternal poverty and obscurity, were all that appeared before me. But the dormant ambition of boyhood, the dreams that delighted my early years, did not wholly forsake me. I had long determined to leave the village and try my fortune in the world; but want of means prevented me. I resolved to tear adversity by the beard and face every obstacle. With difficulty I gathered in as many debts as enabled me to

proceed to Newcastle, and take a passage to London, where I arrived on the first of February, without friends, and almost without money; in fact, with not five shillings in my pocket."

"Poor fellow!" said Peter—and they were sitting together in a tavern in Fleet Street, which is called a north country house; for Peter was in London on business, and having met the Doctor on the street, they went into the tavern to talk of their native hills, and the "old familiar faces." "Poor fellow!" added Peter; and, with a sort of sigh, added—"Ah, sirs! it is really well said that the one half of the world doesna know how the other lives. It would take planning to lay out those five shillings."

"It certainly did," said the scholar. "You are aware that my practice in the village, from a prejudice against what some called my religion, or rather my no religion, was exceedingly limited. In fact, I was a persecuted man, for principles of which I was as ignorant as themselves; and, disdaining to accommodate my habits and conversation to their rules, the persecution increased, and the payments made to me became more limited than my practice. I bade fair to become an actual representative of Shakspeare's apothecary; and would assuredly have thought myself 'passing rich with forty pounds a-year.' But the one half of my practice would not pay the expense of wrapping the powders in paper. On sending to our village tobacconist's, I have had my own accounts returned as snuff-paper; and, though my success was not, I believe, inferior to most in the profession, my patients regarded paying me as throwing money away, or as an unnecessary charity; and never did the payments, taking one year with another, exceed thirty pounds."

"Poor fellow! do ye really say so?" responded Peter; "thirty pounds a-year!—and was that a'? And was ye really not an atheist or a deist, Doctor, as the people gied ye out to be?"

"Whatever I and the mass of mankind are in our practice, Mr Liddell," he replied, "I am neither, when the small still voice of conscience speaks."

"Gie's your hand—gie's your hand, Doctor," cried Peter; "I ask your pardon for onything I ever thought or said respecting ye, as sincerely as ever man did. Conscience is, as ye say, a sma still voice; but I doubt it is one that many will hear aboon the sough o' friends at a deathbed, the thunders o' the day o' judgment, and the roaring and raging o' the bottomless pit. But ye say that ye had barely five shillings in your pocket when ye arrived in London here. How, in a' the world, did ye manage to lay it out?"

"Sixpence," replied the scholar, "went in treating the captain to a glass of grog, when we came on shore, including one for myself."

"That was very foolishly spent, however," interrupted Peter.

"And it being night when we landed," added the Doctor, "another shilling was spent in the public-house for a bed."

"A bed!" exclaimed our Cumberland farmer; "man, had ye not the gumption to sleep aboord, or gie the captain the hint, after treating him wi' the glass. That was eighteenpence clean thrown awa; and only left ye wi' three and sixpence. Poor soul! what did ye do?"

"Beginning to reflect, in the morning," said the other, "that three and sixpence was not an inexhaustible sum, I agreed to pass over the very useful ceremony of a breakfast; and, strolling about, planning what to do, and marvelling at all I saw—after narrowly escaping being jostled to pieces, as I moved slowly from street to street, while every soul in the great city appeared to be walking for a wager but myself—towards three o'clock I dined in an eating-house, for sixpence, by the side of a coal-heaver. The afternoon was also passed in dreamy wandering. After nightfall, I became dispirited and fatigued. I was still unable to form any definite plan of proceeding, and I more than once asked myself what I had come to London to do."

"Poor man! I doubt there are too many like ye," said Peter.

"I was satiated with the busy variety of the scene," he continued; "the very changes became as sameness, and I longed only for a place where I might lie down and rest. I obtained a lodging for the night, in a suspicious-looking public-house, for a sixpence; and rising early on the following morning, my second day in London was spent as the first had been, and at the same expense, save a penny—for on that day my dinner cost me but fivepence. My two shillings and a penny were now sacred, and I feared to incur the expense of a night's lodgings. I was passing what I discovered to be Covent Garden. Crowds were pressing into the theatre. I stood and ran my eyes over the playbill. I saw the names, Kemble! Cooke! Bannister! Siddons!—The temptation was irresistible."

"Irresistible!" cried Peter—"what the mischief do ye mean? I see naething irresistible in the case, unless ye just mean to tell me that ye are a born fool."

"Siddons! Kemble! Cooke! and Bannister!" proceeded our hero, "on the same boards, and on the same night! I thought myself transported to Elysium! I looked for the word *Gallery*, pressed forward with the eager crowd, and threw down my shilling. 'Another shilling, sir,' said the man of checks. I had followed the stream of the two shilling gallery, and thus"——

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the farmer, raising his hands, "did ever man in his right judgment hear the like o' that?—ye're not to be pitied! I wonder ye didna think o' buying a strait jacket!—ye was fitter for it than a playhouse. Doctor, I didna think ye had been such an idiot. But I must say that some mothers bring fools into the world after a'. Did ye really no turn back again?—or what did ye do wi' your last penny? It would be thrown away as wisely as the two shillings, I reckon."

"I plead guilty," said Robert; "I acted as a fool, but bore the consequences like a philosopher. My last shilling had disappeared. The performance proceeded—I was delighted, enraptured, overwhelmed. The curtain dropped. The house was crowded to suffocation—my throat was parched—and with my last penny—(keep your seat, Mr Liddell)—with my last penny I bought an orange from a fruit-seller in the gallery. The second piece was concluded. The human mass moved every one to the tavern or their homes, a supper and a pillow, and I—I alone of the thousands—went forth penniless into the streets, hungry, shivering, and fatigued, to wander without hope!"

"And served ye right," said Peter—"I dinna pity ye, sir. No, no; after that, I'm done wi' ye. But how did ye get through the night?"

"The day dawned," resumed Robert Musgrave, "and I was still wandering—fainting, trembling, cold, and benumbed. I had long had some pretensions to literature. I was born in the midst of poetry. It sang around me from the deathless voices of my native Esk, hymning to its green woods and its massy crags. It looked down upon me from the thunder-belted brows of my native mountains, and drew my soul upwards to itself. It grew with my growth, it became a part of my being, and, in the midst of my debasement, it parted not from me."

"Famous! famous!—drat, ye're an orator, Doctor!" cried the farmer, in admiration of the eloquent fervour of his countryman. "Cumberland—and where is the county like it? I wish, Doctor, I had been a bishop for your sake—ye should have had a benefice."

"My luggage," continued the other, "consisted only of a chest containing little beyond books and manuscripts. With the same feeling which every author may be supposed to have for his productions, I considered mine were not inferior to others which were puffed and published. I say puffed and published; for, now-a-days, it is common for a puff to be both written and published before the work bepraised is in the hands of the printer."

"Coom, now, Maister Musgrave," said the farmer, "not so fast, if you please; I can believe anything that's possible in a reasonable way. But how a book can be praised, before it be read and printed, or, as I should say, before it is a book, I canna comprehend. So ye mustna come over me in that way, Doctor."

"It is not so impossible as you imagine," replied the other; "you know that money is a powerful agent."

"Ay, troth do I," said the farmer; "now I understand ye; I know

'That money makes the mare to go,
Whether she has legs or no.'"

"Well," resumed the surgeon, "laying the hope of fame and reward as an unction to my wounded spirit, I returned to the vessel, and, entrusting my trunk to the care of a wharfinger, I took from it a bundle of manuscripts—consisting of a novel, poems, essays, and papers on medical subjects—and, with a beating heart, proceeded towards Paternoster Row—praying as I went. I passed every bookseller's in the street, measuring the countenance of himself and his shopmen. At length, after passing and repassing several doors a dozen times, as often having my feet upon their thresholds, half drawing my papers from my pocket and thrusting them back again, I ventured into one; and, after a few words awkwardly expressed, holding the manuscripts in my hands, I made known my business. The gentleman, without looking at my productions, but not without looking at me, said his hands were full, and hurried back to his desk. I called on six others; and though my reception with some was more courteous, my success was the same. I applied to the eighth and last. A glimmering of hope returned with the first glance of his countenance. It was not what every one would term inviting; but genuine feeling glowed through a garb of roughness. He received me with politeness, looked over my papers, delicately asked me a few questions, which I neither knew how to answer nor how to evade; he hinted his fears that I had not written on subjects which were exactly in demand in the market, and, in conclusion, requested me to leave the manuscripts, and call on him on the following morning. I again went into the streets, to hold battle with hunger and anticipation. For several hours, hope and hope's fond dreams bore me up; but towards evening, and throughout the night, the wind blew cold and wildly, the rain fell unceasingly. I was drenched and almost motionless, and but for the interference of the patrols, I would fain have lain down to sleep, beneath the cover of a passage, on the damp earth."

"Oh, help us!" said Peter, "what is that o't! I know as well what it is to travel by night, and in a' weathers, as anybody; but, poor man! I had none o' your sufferings to contend wi'."

"The longed-for, and yet dreaded hour arrived," resumed the other. "I approached the shop with feelings as anxious, and not more enviable than those of a criminal when he is dragged to the bar. The publisher was out upon business, and one of his young men returned me my manuscripts, and a letter with his master's compliments and thanks. I do not remember leaving the shop. The stupefaction of death was dashed upon my soul. I believe that I appeared tranquil; but it was the tranquillity of misery immovable beneath its own load. In despair, I broke open the letter—a guinea fell from its folds at my feet."

"Heaven bless him!" interrupted the farmer.

"Amen!" responded the scholar, and continued—"Without waiting to read the contents of his note, I hurried into a tavern to allay the cravings of hunger, and to warm, or rather thaw, my almost frozen body. But I sickened, and could eat little. I had wanted food until, like a spoiled child, my appetite refused that for which it had yearned. With the still open letter upon my knee, as my joints began to feel the influence of returning heat, I suddenly sank, with my head upon my bosom, into a deep, dreamless sleep; and being awoke by the rioting of some half-drunken men, I found one of them had made free with the back part of my letter to light his pipe, which had been addressed after the usual silly and absurd fashion common amongst literary men—who ought rather to set an example in despising vain frivolities—*R. Musgrave, Esq.* 'I beg your pardon, *Squire*,' said the fellow, in a tone of irony. 'Here's wishing you a pair of new shoes and health to wear them, *Squire*,' said a third, in the same tone, raising a tankard to his lips. And the party broke into a laugh of derision."

"Doctor!" exclaimed the farmer indignantly, "ye deserved all ye got, if ye didna make a broom o' the bunch o' them, and sweep the house wi' the hair o' their heads."

"I am not remarkable for brooking insults," added Musgrave, "and of that more than one of the company had cause to be convinced. In his letter the bookseller spoke of my writings as displaying considerable originality and genius. Parts of them, he thought, exhibited marks of being written too hastily, and recommended their omission. He regretted that he durst not hazard their publication; as, unfortunately, too much depended upon patronage, connection, or the influence of a name. He recommended publishing by subscription, and brought forward the example of Pope, Burns, and others, to render the advice palatable, as children receive sweetmeats after acid drugs. He begged to enclose a guinea for two copies to himself; and, wishing me success, he said it would afford him pleasure, by every means in his power, to forward the publication. I will not exhaust your patience by a recital of calamities which a critic, ignorant of their meaning, or ashamed to look back on them, would pronounce vulgar and in bad taste. Being contented with the luxury of half a bed, for which I paid sixpence, I experienced the truth of the proverb, that 'misery maketh a man acquainted with strange bedfellows.' Beggars, thieves, men of all nations, and of all climes and colours, shared my pillow. But I resolved to husband my guinea, indulging myself with sleeping one night and wandering the streets the next, alternately. It was in vain, in the meantime, that I used every effort to obtain the situation of assistant-surgeon. In London, more perhaps than in any city, appearance is everything, and I carried my own condemnation written on my ruined garments."

"Troth, I have remarked there is some truth in what ye say, Doctor," said the farmer; "if a man wishes to prosper, he should never, if possible, appear like a shorn sheep wi' the fleece bare on his back."

"My money," added the scholar, "was again reduced to five shillings; and, to ward off the approach of starvation, I was compelled to renounce the comforts of a bed once in forty-eight hours, as a luxury I could no longer afford. The very shoes left my feet with ceaseless wandering. My feet bled as I walked. My hat became shapeless; I was ashamed to look on it. The wind began to sport through my garments, and found loopholes for his

sport. My person became like a moving spirit of famine, clothed with poverty, and shivering in a storm. My spirit was not broken, but it was bowed down. Yielding to the hope of despair, I attempted publishing by subscription. The plan may succeed where a man is known, where he has friends to push the subscription for him, or where he has impudence that is proof against insult; but, amongst strangers, it is a hopeless task. I was doomed to endure indignities from ignorant and contemptible menials, who, glancing at my figure, thrust the doors in my face, as on a common beggar! O sir! the recollection haunts me still. It is the only act of my life on which I cannot think without a burning blush coming over my face. I need not say it was unsuccessful. For thirty successive nights I wandered through the streets of this city, exposed to the storms of February and the bleak winds of March, sleeping as I moved along, or standing and knowing not that I stood, till aroused by the jest of a passing unfortunate, or rudely driven on by the watchmen of the night. Ten times in the hour, I would stumble beneath the oppression of sleep to the ground. But I will not detail those days and nights of misery. The scenes I then encountered would provoke a smile and a tear at the same moment. They were a mingling of the ludicrous and the wretched. Yet, to give you but one or two instances out of many:—One cold and weary night, sleep came upon me like death itself. I was wandering along Thames Street, and came to Billingsgate. Porters and oyster-sellers were lounging about the market, some sitting smoking, laughing, or drinking, though it was not an hour past midnight. I sought shelter beneath the sheds, and stretched myself upon one of the tables or benches. But the cold was intense. My very blood seemed freezing. I arose and removed to a corner of the market over the side of the river, and there, there was one of the open shops, stalls, or sheds, the one side of which was screened by a large and loosely hanging canvass sign, facing the river, of more than six feet square, setting forth the occupant of the stall as fishmonger, oyster-dealer, and so forth. Through the lamplight and starlight, I cast a longing and envious look at the loose and painted canvass. I took it down, and stretching myself upon the bench, spread it over me as a blanket. It was the most comfortable covering I had had for many nights. But scarce had sleep, which pressed heavily upon me, sealed up my eyelids, when I was aroused by a rude hand shaking me by the shoulder, and a ruder voice exclaiming—'Hollo! who have we got here?' It was the proprietor of the shed. I started—rubbed my eyes—stammered out an apology. A crowd of fishwomen and porters gathered round us. The fishmonger spoke of calling for the police. I expostulated. He offered to hold me. I raised my hand, and I am thankful that his table, which was a fixture, was between him and the river. I rushed through the crowd; and whether the blow which I had lent the fishmonger operated upon their courage and humanity, I cannot tell, but they made way for me. I had not, however, proceeded far, when sleep again became too much for me, and too literally I 'caught myself tripping.' Its influence was irresistible, and St Paul's had not yet chimed the hour of three. I saw a cart standing beneath an open gateway; and, with gratitude in my heart, I lay down on it as a couch of luxury. But there I had not lain long when I was awoke by a person at my side. I started.

'Don't be afraid, sir,' said the intruder, 'it is only a poor brother in misfortune!'

I turned round and glanced at him through the dim light, but scarce could I discover what manner of man he was, till sleep again 'locked up my senses in forgetfulness. A little after daybreak, I awoke shivering, my joints stiff, my teeth chattering together, and my whole body a mass of pain. I perceived that my 'poor brother in misfortune' was, or rather I ought to say, had been dressed respectably, yea, even fashionably. He carried with him a portfolio, which, even in his sleep, he pressed closely beneath his arm. As I arose, he awoke; and, groaning, he arose also and accompanied me. I know not whether it was mutual wretchedness, or the portfolio beneath his arm, that caused me to feel a regard for him at the first glance; but, certain it is, I was prepossessed in his favour. We were a couple of strange, miserable-looking characters, as we went drowsily, laggardly, and lamely up Fish Street Hill together. I observed the night-watchmen, who had not left their beat, turned round, and even held up their lanterns—though the morning's light was well advanced—and examined us as we passed. As though our errand or our thoughts were the same, we proceeded towards the Park together; and when the sun arose, he opened his portfolio, and exhibited it to me. He was an artist, and an artist, too, of high promise. His portfolio contained many bold and vigorous pencil sketches, where soul, taste, and a daring hand were exemplified. He had also a number of beautiful pieces in water-colours, which shewed that his touch was delicate as well as bold. I took my pencil, and wrote a few lines on the back of one of the Bristol boards on which one of the subjects was sketched, and the artist and I became friends. Neither of us had wherewith to purchase a breakfast; but, in the forenoon, he had to call upon a printseller in the Strand with some of his pieces in water-colours, and we parted with a promise to meet again on the following day. But an accident, which I shall afterwards mention, prevented me from keeping my engagement; and we parted without the one knowing the name of the other. I have not again met with him; but, until this hour, I regret that I learned not the name of a young artist, whom I met with under such circumstances, and whose productions manifested high genius, a correct taste, and a skilful hand. Now, at this period, sir, I should tell you that the greater part of the day was generally spent in attempts to sleep upon the seats in the Park; and, dreadful as the pangs of hunger were, at length, (and this is no idle saying,) I could have been content to die beneath their rage, to have purchased but one hour of rest and repose. The agony of hunger yields to the agony of sleep."

"And do you really say, Doctor," inquired the farmer, "that ye have suffered a' this in a Christian land, even in this city? I hardly think it possible."

"Some may doubt it," replied Robert, earnestly; "but the remembrance of what I have endured will live as a coal of fire in my heart for ever; and the fiftieth part of what I suffered has not been told you. But, sir, before I proceed farther with my story, allow me to go back to another part of my history, and advert to another circumstance. You will remember—it is more than a dozen years ago—a military gentleman, whom we generally called Colonel Forster, took up his residence on the banks of the Esk, a few miles from Longtown. He was, I believe, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the service of the East India Company."

"I remember him perfectly well, Mr Musgrave," said the farmer, "and know him yet; and, moreover, I also remember that ye was remarkably fond of his daughter Bertha, and that it was said that it wasna her beauty ye was in love wi', but her siller; for the Colonel was understood to be a perfect Nabob, and I have heard that he forbade you to come about the house."

"Sir," continued Musgrave—and there was a glow of indignation on his countenance—"I care not what the world may have said, nor what they do say. The lark greeteth not the dawning of the dawn with more fervent delight than I first beheld the fair countenance of Bertha Forster.

I knew not that her father was rich, and, when I did know it, I grieved that he was so. But to me she plighted her first vow, and pledged her 'maiden troth;' and, though I knew that, by her fulfilling it, I should take the hand of a penniless bride—for it is true that her father threatened to disinherit her if she kept my company, and to leave all that he was possessed of to a son in India—yet I loved her the more. I loved her for herself, and our feelings were reciprocal. Ever shall I remember the night on which we parted, previous to my leaving Cumberland for this city. It was in a deep wood, near her father's house. The Esk murmured by our feet, and the grey twilight fell over us. The evening-star was in the heavens; and the wood, the star, the river, and the twilight, were the witnesses of our tears and of our vows. But you are past the period of life when the recital of such things can be interesting; and respect for her whom my soul worships, forbids me to say more. Yet, although her father despised and spurned me, we parted with a promise to write to each other, with a declaration to preserve our plighted vows inviolate even unto death. It was agreed that I should send my letters to her, addressed to an humble but mutual friend. But I was long in London ere I wrote; for I had not the means of writing; and, when an answer came to that letter—oh! I never knew real misery till then! She knew not the depth of my wretchedness—the extremeness of my poverty! I beheld my name on the board at the post-office amongst the list of persons whose residence could not be found. Day after day I visited it, and stood with my eyes fixed upon my own name, while my heart was ready to burst with agony and anxiety. I knew the letter was from my Bertha; but I had not the few pence necessary to relieve it. I had no means of obtaining them. I was a penniless, houseless stranger, unknown to every one in this vast city. And, after gazing on the board till my eyes were dimmed by rising tears, and my brain excited almost to madness, I was wont to flee from the city; and often, in solitude and in darkness, pour forth the bitterness of my spirit to the night winds. Often, at such times, in the excess of misery, I have wrung my hands together, and exclaimed aloud—

'What would my poor Bertha think if she knew this!'

At length the list of names amongst which mine appeared was removed from the post-office and replaced by others; and when, after obtaining the means of paying for the letter, I made inquiry after it, I was informed that it had been returned. I doubted not but that she would imagine I had forgotten her; and, as I turned away in disappointment and in hopelessness, I said unto myself—'Farewell, my Bertha!'"

"Help us, Doctor!" exclaimed Peter; "is it really possible that anybody can have been so put about for a thirteen pence matter! Yet, how do we fling away shilling after shilling, day after day, without ever thinking o' the road they are going! And how ready we are to say about anything—'Oh, it was only a shilling!' But, Doctor, when ye think what a relief 'only a shilling' would have given to your mind at that moment, surely ye will have considered weel the length and breadth o' every sixpence ye have spent since then. It will be a lesson to me, however, to be more cautious how I ever spend thirteenpence again; and, if I find myself ready to fling it away on any unwiselike or unprofitable purposes, I will just think—'What good will what I am going to do wi' my money, do me?—and what would Doctor Musgrave have given for it, when he saw the letter from his sweetheart, and hadna the thirteenpence to open it?' As sure as death!—as we used to say at school, and that is gay sure—had ony other body told me what ye have said but yoursel, I would have laughed at it. Had I read it in print, I wouldna have believed it. But there is one thing in it, and that is, it just shews us what poor dependent creatures we are one upon another. Doctor, ye had a sair trial there for a sma' matter."

"You, sir," continued Mr Musgrave, "no doubt consider London an immense, almost a limitless city; but, sir, it is too small for the bounds of misery. Often have I wandered from Knightsbridge to Mile End, yea, from Cheswick to the East India Docks, and slowly returned the way I came, thinking that daylight would never break, and wondering how people spoke of London as a great city. They, sir, who would really know the limits of London, must shake hands with misery as I have done. They must wander its streets by night, without food and without hope, and they will marvel how short they are. People talk of losing themselves amongst the intricacies and many turnings of this city. It is nonsense, sir—sheer stupidity. Let them once be lost in misery, in penniless, houseless wretchedness, and should a purse shew itself at their feet, they would discover where they were in a moment. The man who has no money never loses himself in London—none do, but fools who have it to lose. But, sir, it was on the very night after I had attempted to sleep in Billingsgate, beneath the comfortable covering of a fishmonger's sign, and dreamed by the side of an artist in a drayman's cart, that I was wandering on the borough side of the river, and had proceeded nearly three miles beyond the Elephant and Castle, when cries for assistance roused me from my walking dream. I rushed forward. A gentleman in an open carriage, with his servant, were attacked by four footpads, armed with knives and bludgeons. I took up a stone from the road, and, hurling it at the head of one of the robbers, when within a few yards of them, stretched him on the ground. We were then man to man. I sprang upon another—I grappled with him, overpowered him, and wrenched the bludgeon from his hands, but not until he had plunged his knife into my side. It was a bad wound, but not a dangerous one. With the bludgeon which I had wrenched from the hand of the robber, I rushed upon another of his associates, who, I found, had that moment overcome the gentleman to whose rescue I had providentially arrived. I dealt him a heavy and a hearty blow upon his busiest arm, which causing him to find that he had only his limbs left, he took to his heels and ran. The two whom I had already overthrown, had anticipated him in his flight, and, on seeing him run, the fourth followed their example. I attempted to follow them, but fell upon the ground from loss of blood. The gentleman was himself wounded, but slightly; and he, with his servant, raising me from the ground, and placing me in his carriage, conveyed me to the nearest inn. There, after a surgeon had been sent for, and my wound dressed, he requested to know who I was, and to whom he was indebted for his liberty and his life. But in all that concerned myself I was silent; and, in answer to all questions as to whom or what I was, I was dumb. My wound was deep, though not dangerous; and all that I regretted was, that I should be left an invalid in an inn, while I had nothing to recompense those who attended on me. After earnestly entreating to know who I was, or what was my name—though I have reason to believe that, from my dejected appearance, he entertained a most sorry idea of me—the gentleman whom I had rescued proceeded onwards to London. But I was silent to all his inquiries. Pride sealed up my tongue, and I shook my head and said nothing. I could not speak—shame and poverty tortured me more than my wound.

Within an hour he proceeded on his journey; and, on the following day, he returned with a medical gentleman to visit me. It was with difficulty that I could sit up in my bed to welcome them. The man of surgery began by asking many questions, which I answered like a true Scotsman, by asking others which startled him; and I heard him whisper to him whom I had rescued.

'Sir, he is, without doubt, a member of my profession.'

The gentleman—I mean him whom I rescued from the ruffians—came forward to me; he took my hand in his—most earnestly he took it—and, as he held it, there was something like a tear—a tear of gratitude rolling in his eyes.

'Sir,' said he, 'to your courage I owe my life. Allow me to ask by what name I shall call my deliverer. It is evident that you are not, or that you have not always been what your present appearance bespeaks. Let me know, therefore, how I am to thank you—how I can reward you as I ought.'

'Sir,' answered I, 'you are a stranger to me; so am I to you. Let us remain so. If you speak of reward, you will cause me to regret what I did in attempting your rescue. Whatever I am, whatever I have been, matters not. I saw a fellow-man attacked and overpowered, and I attempted to deliver him. The humblest animal, prompted by its instinct, would have done the same. I am entitled to no thanks for what I have done—and, above all, I wish no questions asked of me.'"

"Faith, Doctor, ye answered nobly, and just as ye ought to have, if ye had had a hundred pounds in your pocket; but, man, ye stood in your ain light. There is nae saying what he might have done for you. It might hae been the king or the prime minister for onything ye kenned."

"He might," resumed the scholar; "but he rejoined, 'Sir, I admire the independence of your spirit, but wherefore should you, without cause, reject the acquaintance of one who seeks your friendship? You have endangered your life to save mine—what stronger claim could you have on my everlasting gratitude? If common feeling prompted you to rescue me, suffer me not to leave you until I have testified that I am actuated by such feelings, in common with yourself. You refuse to tell me your name; mine is William Forster, a Colonel in the service of the East India Company.'

At the mention of his name, my heart leaped within me. The brother of my Bertha, and of whom I have spoken, was in the service of the East India Company. I dreaded that he and the individual I had saved, might be the same person; and I resolved, more determinedly than before, to conceal from him my name and circumstances. But, finding he could learn nothing from me, he offered me money. O sir! at that time I could have taken his life—I could have taken my own. To what have I sunk, I thought, or what am I now, that I should be treated as the veriest beggar that crawls upon the streets! 'Sir,' I exclaimed wildly, 'keep your gold—your dross—your insulting dross. I did not assist you in your hour of need, that you should insult my situation by a mendicant's reward. I, sir, have the feelings of a gentleman as well as you, whatever I may now seem—therefore torment me not.' He informed me that he had to leave London on the following day; and he entreated that I would tell him who I was, that he might shew that he was grateful for what I had done, in a way that might not be painful to my feelings. But the thought that he was the brother of my Bertha haunted me, maddened me, and I waved my hand to him and cried—'Away! away!' His countenance bespoke him to be a man to whom I could have poured forth my whole soul; but even in that countenance I read her lineaments, and my soul moved like an agitated thing that I could feel within me, as I gazed on them.

'Go, sir,' I exclaimed; 'and if you will be grateful, be so to one who rejoices in having been instrumental in assisting you. Leave me. I ask no more, for your questions torture me, and your pecuniary offers insult me.'

He left me, but never did I behold a man part from another more reluctantly, or one who was more under the influence of strong emotion. My wound confined me to the inn for five weeks, and, during much of that time, my thoughts were distracted regarding the bill of the innkeeper. But one day he came to me and said—

'Sir, I don't know how you and the gentleman whom you rescued from the highwaymen stand; but one thing I know, he is a gentleman every inch of him. He has paid for all that you have had, or may have for a month to come; and here, master, are fifty pounds which he left me to give to you in as delicate a way as I could, for, as he said, you were rather proud-spirited. Now, master, here is the money, and he was as safe in trusting it in my hands as if he had put it in the bank.'

I knew not what to do; but, after a struggle, and a severe one, I accepted the money. You may despise me for what I did"——

"Me despise you!" cried the farmer; "for what, I would like to ken? It is the only wiselike action I have heard you say that you did. The man that would despise another for taking fifty pounds where it was deserved, is a being that doesna understand what money is, or what it was made for. They may despise ye that like, Doctor, upon that account, but it winna be me."

"Well, sir," resumed Musgrave, "with the fifty pounds in my pocket I again appeared upon the streets of London. But a change had passed over me. Even the policemen who before had ordered me to 'walk on,' knew me not. I was another man—I was as one on whom fashion shed its sunning influence. I again endeavoured to obtain a situation as an assistant-surgeon, but the attempt was unsuccessful. I should have told you that it was owing to being confined with my wound that I was unable to meet my 'brother in misfortune,' the artist of whom I have spoken. I now tried my fortune as a writer for the magazines, and was paid for what I wrote, even liberally, as I considered it. But there was one drawback attending this liberality: though I could write an article for which I received three, four, or seven guineas, in a day, (for authors always calculate in guineas, though they are paid in pounds,) yet it was not every day. neither was it every month, that I could get such an article accepted; and it was not every magazine that admitted me as a contributor. But by such writing I managed to live; and, as my name became known, I felt less of the misery which I endured when I first embarked in the precarious trade of authorship. Yet a precarious trade I still found it to be. I was enabled to live, but I lived between the hand and the mouth.

The publisher whom I have already mentioned as having given a guinea towards the publishing of my works by subscription, engaged me to translate a novel from the French, and a small work from the Italian, of which language I had but a scanty knowledge. But it does not require the perfect knowledge of a language to be a translator, which many consider necessary."

"I canna say," said Peter; "I must confess ye are out o my depths there—but get on wi' your story, for I'm not sure but I may have something to tell ye."

"Well, sir," resumed the scholar, "after the translations had appeared, and when the seductions of a literary life, notwithstanding all its privations and all its uncertainty, had induced me to abandon all thoughts of pursuing my own profession, I determined to write for the stage. It would be tedious for me to tell you of all the difficulties I had to encounter, before I could obtain an audience of the theatrical managers, or what was called the committee of management. I found them more difficult of access than the Cham of Tartary. As well might I have undertaken a mission to Pekin, with the intent of pulling the celestial emperor by the button. But at length my object was attained. A tragedy that I had written was accepted and announced for representation. The eventful night came. The new drama—my

drama—was to oe performed. The first scene went off in silence—in utter silence—and often the actors mangled the lines most miserably. They forgot Hamlet's advice. But, as the first act was concluded, pit, boxes, and gallery burst into a tumult of applause. I was seated in the pit. The sweat broke upon my brow. Vanity wrought triumphantly in my bosom. I was the greatest man in London. The second, the third, the fourth, the fifth acts concluded in the same manner. The curtain fell, and the audience shouted—'The author! the author!' For this tribute of public approbation I was not prepared. The stage-manager came to me, and still the audience in the gallery kept thundering and shouting—'The author! the author!' He insisted that I should appear upon the stage, and before the audience. Vain as I was, I sickened at his words; but he took my hand and led me forth. I became as a thing that moves, without a consciousness of or a power over its moving. I had become pale as death. They led me to what they call the green-room, and they put rouge upon my face. But it was in vain, and the cold sweat swept it away, and left my countenance as if covered with wounds. I was led upon the stage as a sheep is led to the slaughter. The lights flashed on me, and I beheld twice a thousand eyes fixed upon me. I knew not how to act. I trembled—bowed—threw my eyes in bewilderment over the multitude; but, as I was about to address them, on whom amongst that mixed assembly should my eyes fall, but on my Bertha! I started. A frenzy came upon me. I sprang towards the pit. Yet it is in vain for me to tell you, for I know not what I did. She sat in a box immediately facing me. I heard a woman's scream; I knew it came from where she was. The multitude seemed rising and moving around me, and every eye was on me. But I cannot describe to you what I felt or what I saw. I became unconscious. I knew only that I had seen her—that she was somewhere. There was a noise like that of many waters in my ears. My head went round—my eyes were blind. When I recovered, I was seated in the green-room, and the actors in their strange dresses surrounded me. They endeavoured to restore me to consciousness, as though I had been a sickly maiden that had fainted in their arms; and when I did recover from the sickness and insanity that came over me—

'Where—oh, where,' I cried, 'is my Bertha?'

I remember not of having done so; but I have been told that I did. You may think, sir, that I acted wildly, as a madman, or as a fool; but, before you condemn, think of what I had endured—of my recent misery, and of my vanity when shout rose on shout, and the cry from the assembled thousands was—'The author! the author!' Such changes, sir, were enough to turn a steadier head than mine."

"For my part, Doctor," said Peter, "I have no notion o' plays; I never saw one in my life, and I canna say that I a'thegither comprehend ye. But let me hear about Miss Bertha."

"All that I could learn concerning her was," resumed Musgrave, "that a young lady in the boxes had uttered a sudden scream as she beheld me and the strange bewilderment that came over me, but that she had immediately been conveyed away by her friends in a coach. This only have I been able to learn. But it was she. Though all else that took place is as a wreck upon my memory, I see her before me now as I at that moment beheld her; I see still her one wild look that entered my soul, and I yet hear her heart-piercing cry, which brought delirium upon me, and rendered me dead to every other sound. But, from that night, I have been able to hear no more concerning her. I have sought her in church and in chapel, in the theatres and in the public walks, but never again have I beheld her. Often also have I written to Cumberland; but my letters have remained unanswered or been returned. She has forsaken me, or she has been compelled to forsake me; for when I last beheld her, her face still beamed with affection, and her wild and sudden cry was the offspring of an old but a still living affection."

"I hear, by what ye say, Doctor," rejoined the farmer "that ye are as fond o' Miss Bertha as ever. Now, as I said to ye before, I am not certain but what I have something that ye might wish to hear, to communicate to ye; and, before doing so, with your permission, I would just ask you one or two plain questions. Ye have told me a great deal of the miserable state ye was in after ye came to London, and I would just like to ask ye if ye are better off now, and how and in what respect ye are so? I trust, therefore, that ye will by no means think the question impertinent; for I assure you, it is for your sake that I ask it, and not for any gratification to myself."

"Well, sir," answered the scholar, "to be as plain with you as you desire, I have shaken hands with privation, and left it upon the road, to form the acquaintance of those who may follow me; or, to be more plain with you, I found that literature was a good staff but a bad crutch; and, as I began to gather my feet, I used it accordingly. In a word, as my name became known amongst men, my labours became more and more profitable; and, three years ago, thinking that I had obtained the means of doing so, I made an attempt to resume my profession as a surgeon. For many months, it was but an attempt, and a hopeless one, too; but gradually practice dawned or crept upon me. I am now employed as well as other members of my profession are; and, with the assistance of my literary labours, I look back upon the penury with which I struggled, and wish it to remain where I left it. But, though I have known something of the moonshine of fame as it has scattered its rays upon my head, and felt also the influence of the warmer beams of profit as I began to bask in the sun of popularity, yet there was and there is one dark and unsunned spot in my heart—and that is, the remembrance of my Bertha. Still does imagination conjure up her sudden glance, her one wild cry and look of agony, as I came forward to receive the plaudits of the multitude, when, as the bay-leaves were circling my brow, the prickly brier was rudely drawn across my bosom."

"Well, Doctor," said Peter, "ye have not just spoken so plain as I could have wished; but, I dare to say, that I comprehend ye. When ye eat a meal now, ye ken where the next is to come from; and if Miss Bertha still thinks o' ye, and were to gie you her hand, there would be no likelihood o' her being brought in contact with the privations with which ye have manfully struggled, and which, I am happy to hear, (and, I may say, more happy to perceive—for a person's own eyes are excellent witnesses,) ye have overcome. Now, sir, hearken to me, for I have something to tell ye. I had always a sort of liking for ye, Doctor; and though I did see ye foolish and stupid in many things, yet I was sorry for ye, and I said I believed that ye was a lad o' real genius, and of a right heart at the bottom. More than that, I said, that, if ye minded your hand, ye would be heard tell of in the world—and I have not been mistaken; for, even down in Cumberland, we have seen your name in the papers; and a hundred times have I said to my neighbours—'I always told ye that lad would rise to something.' But now, sir—now to the main subject, the one in which you will feel the greatest interest. Ye say that ye again and again wrote to Miss Bertha to Cumberland, and never got an answer. I am in no way surprised at that at all; and for this simple reason, that old Colonel Forster left Eskside five years ago, and went to reside near a place they call Elstree, about ten miles from this city. Now, the way in which I am acquainted with the circumstance is this:—About a year after ye left, the old Nabob, as we used to ca' him, bought the farm that I rented, and became my landlord. Therefore, when he came to live in this quarter, I had to send my rents here. But sir, he understands that I am in London—for I just

handed him my rent, being here, the other day—and he has invited me to dine wi' him at his house to-morrow. Now, sir, if ye hae nae objections, I will just tak you out wi' me as an old friend; and if ye're not made welcome, I shall not be welcome either. So, say the word—will ye go wi' me, or will ye not?"

"I will—yes, yes, I will!" answered Mr Musgrave, eagerly.

"Well, well," said Peter, "there need be no more about it, then—say that I meet you at this house to-morrow at two o'clock."

"Agreed," replied the other.

"But," returned Peter, "there is one thing I forgot to tell ye, and that is, that I understand Miss Bertha is on the eve of being married, and highly married, too, they say wi' us. Therefore, ye will not be surprised if ye find your former acquaintance forgotten, or seemingly forgotten, which, in such matters, amounts to somewhat about the same thing."

On the following day, Mr Peter Liddell and Robert Musgrave entered a cab in Fleet Street together, and proceeded towards Elstree.

"Now," said Peter, as they approached the residence of his landlord, "I believe that I may be running my head against a wall; for I am well aware that the old Colonel never liked ye. You are one who would be unwelcome at any time, but doubly so at a time like this, when his daughter is on the point of being married. But I will tell ye what it is—I am just as independent as he is. I am as able to live without the help o' the landlord, as the landlord is to live without the help o' the tenant. Therefore, if he puts down his brows at you when we are introduced, I will shew him the back o' my coat, and so good day to him."

"I believe, then," said Musgrave, "that with him I shall be no welcome guest; but, if Bertha welcome me, it is enough. You have spoken to me of her intended marriage—be it so. If she has forgotten me, if she has ceased to care for me, I will look upon her and bless her, in remembrance of days which have passed away as the shadow of a cloud passeth over the earth. But with that blessing hope will depart; for, sir, it was the remembrance of her that sustained me in all my struggles. It was the hope that she might, would one day be mine, that induced me to hope against hope, to wrestle with despair. For her sake only have I sought for fame, as a miser would seek after hidden treasure; and when it began to throw its light and its sunniness over me, she was the flower that rendered sunlight beautiful—for what is there lovely in light, but as a thing which maketh the face of the earth fair to look upon?"

They drew up at the door of the Colonel's residence, and were ushered into a room where he and a party of his friends sat. Peter, who was what people in the south would call a *'cute* man, was beginning to make an apology, saying—

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, for the liberty I have taken; but meeting with my old friend, Doctor Musgrave, yesterday, I prevailed on him to come out wi' me, as we were a' Cumberland folk together; and, though he is a great man now"——

But, while Peter spoke, one of the company started forward. He grasped our hero by the hand, and exclaimed—

"My deliverer! Long and anxiously have I sought for you; but, until this hour, nothing have I been able to learn respecting you. Father," he added, "this is the gentleman of whom a hundred times you have heard me speak, as having, at the peril of his own life, saved mine. I have never known or met him again until now. Thank him with me." And, as he spoke, he held the Doctor's hand between his

The old man rose. He evidently laboured to speak to the stranger; but other feelings obtained the mastery. He stretched out his hand. He touched Robert Musgrave's—he coldly bowed to him. The blood left his face.

"Father," exclaimed the son, "you are ill. Hath gratitude"——But he paused as he beheld the expression of his father's features. They betrayed anger and agony at the same moment.

"Son," said he, "I would speak with you: that man—that man," and he pointed to the scholar impatiently; and, beckoning to his son, rose to leave the room.

"Sir," said Musgrave, proudly, "if my presence trouble you. I can withdraw."

"My friend, what mean you?—what means my father?" asked the brother of Bertha, who was, indeed, the same individual that the scholar had rescued.

"I dinna ken," answered Peter Liddell; "but, if Doctor Musgrave go to the door, I go to the door too."

The father and the son looked at each other. The glance of the latter sought from the former an explanation.

At that instant, the door opened, and the much talked of Bertha entered the room.

"Bertha!" exclaimed Musgrave, and stepped forward, as if unconscious of what he did.

"Robert!" she rejoined, clasping her hands together. She started—she fell back—her brother supported her in his arms.

"Bertha!—father!—friend!" he exclaimed, hastily glancing to each as he spoke, "what means this?"

A man of middle age rose, and as he hurried from the room, said—

"Farewell, Forster," addressing the old man—"you have deceived, you have insulted me. The man who is to be your daughter's husband is with her now."

It was the intended husband of Bertha that so spoke, and left the apartment. The old Colonel rose to follow him.

"Stay, father," said his son—"what I have now witnessed requires an explanation. This stranger, to whom I owe my life, you have seen before—my sister has seen him—and there is something connected with your acquaintance with each other that I must understand."

"Yes," cried the old man, "I have seen him before—I have—I have."

"Bertha?" said his son; but she raised her hands before her face and wept.

"Sir," said the younger Forster, "I can be grateful. Though I am not acquainted with you, my sister is. Let me call my deliverer *brother!*" And he took the hand of his weeping sister and placed in that of Robert Musgrave.

The old man started; but his son soothed him. And Robert Musgrave stood with the hand of Bertha Forster locked in his; and within a few weeks he called that hand his own, and was happy—and the sufferings that the Poor Scholar had endured became as a tale that is told

WILSONS

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE FIRST AND SECOND MARRIAGE.

"I BEG your pardon, sir," said a venerable-looking, white-headed man, accosting me one day, about six weeks ago, as I was walking alone near the banks of the Whitadder; 'ye are the author of the 'Border Tales,' sir—are ye not?"

Not being aware of anything in the "Tales of the Borders" of which I need to be ashamed, and moreover being accustomed to meet with such salutations, after glancing at the stranger, with the intention, I believe, of taking the measure of his mind, or scrutinizing his motive in asking the question, I answered—"I am, sir."

"Then, sir," said he, "I can tell ye a true story, and one that happened upon the Borders here within my recollection, and which was also within my own knowledge, which I think would make a capital tale."

Now, I always rejoice in hearing any tale or legend from the lips of a grey-haired chronicler. I do not recollect the period when I did not take an interest in such things; and a tradition of the olden time, or a tale that pictured human nature as it is, ever made the unceasing birr, birring of the spinning-wheel—which the foot, belike, of an aged widow kept in perpetual motion—as agreeable to me as the choicest music. For what is tradition but the fragments which History left or lost in its progress to eternity; and which Poetry, following in its wake, gathered up as treasures too precious to be overwhelmed by the approaching waves of oblivion, and, breathing upon them the influence of its own immortal spirit, embalmed them in the hearts and in the memories of men unto all generations? Though, therefore, it was no ancient legend which the stranger had to relate, yet, knowing that it might not on that account be the less interesting, I thanked him, "and with greedy ears devoured up his discourse."

The story which he then related to me, I shall, therefore, after him, communicate to my readers.

You will excuse me in not mentioning the name of the town in which the chief incidents mentioned in our story occurred. There may be some yet living to whom some of them might not be agreeable. I shall, therefore, speak of it as the town of H——, and other circumstances referred to may lead you to form an idea of "its whereabouts."

Many years have passed—at least forty—since the period at which our story commences; and there then dwelt in the town of H—— one Walter Kerr. (So you will allow me to call him.) His parents were what are generally called respectable sort of people; for the house in which they dwelt was their own, and there were also three or four others, all very good and respectable-looking houses, (as we say again,) the rents of which they received from their tenants. But, there is no word in our language to which less respect is shewn than the word respectability. It is prostituted every day. It is no matter whether a man be the proprietor of one house, one acre, one pound, or a hundred houses, a thousand acres, and ten thousand pounds; neither houses, acres, nor money can make him truly respectable. As the sun, moon, and stars, shed light upon the earth, so do honesty, virtue, and strict integrity confer respectability on the head of their possessor. I care not what a man's situation in life may be, nor whether he be a hewer of wood or a drawer of water, the lord of a forest, or one who hath a fleet upon the seas: shew me a good, a virtuous, and an upright man—and there is a respectable man, be his rank or situation in life what it may. The parents of Walter Kerr, however, were respectable in a better and a truer sense of the term than that of being merely persons of a certain property: they were Christains not only in their profession but in their practice. Walter was by far the cleverest of the family; and from his boyhood his parents designed him for the pulpit, and gave him an education accordingly. Like many parents, they thought that his cleverness was a sufficient reason why they should bring him up to the sacred profession, without once considering how far the seriousness of his thoughts and habits fitted him for preparing for the office. It must be acknowledged, however, that in this they were not singular. We find hundreds who, without perceiving either cleverness or piety in their favourite son, resolve to make him a minister. Yea, frequently, from his very cradle his calling is determined. I remember having heard a good woman say—"If I live to have another son, and he be spared to me, I shall bring him up for the kirk!"

But the parents of Walter Kerr were possessed of more discretion; and when they found that he was averse to their proposal of his becoming a preacher, they abandoned the idea, though not without reluctance, and some tears on the part of his mother. Now, Walter was a youth of a gentle temper and an affectionate heart; but, at the same time, he seemed formed for being what you would term a man of business. He was shrewd, active, speculative, and calculating, with quite a sufficient degree of caution, as ballast, to regulate his more ardent propensities. At his own request, he was bound apprentice to a general merchant in his native town; and before he was twenty-one years of age, he commenced business for himself. He began with but a small stock in trade; for his parents could not afford a great deal to set him up. Yet he was attentive to business; he pushed it, and his trade increased, and his stock became more various. He had scarcely, however, been two years in business, when he took unto himself a portionless wife. His parents were displeased—they looked upon him as lost. Every one said that he had done a foolish thing, and agreed that it was madness in him to marry, at least so hastily, and before he could say that even the goods in his shop were his own. But people are very apt to talk a great deal of nonsense upon this subject. The important question is not *when* a man marries, but *who* he marries. They talk of a wife tying up his hands, and placing a barrier before his prospects; in short, as bringing a blight over his worldly expectations, like an untimely frost nipping and withering an opening bud. Now, all this is mere twaddle—a shewing off of self-wisdom, to make known how much more wisely we have or would have acted than the person referred to. It is one of the thousand popular fallacies which ever float on the surface of the chit-chat of society. A married man, young or old, is always a more sponsible sort of character than a bachelor. If a man take unto himself an amiable and a prudent wife, even though she bring him not a shilling as a dowry, and although he may be young in years and a beginner in business, he doeth

well. Had he doubled his stock, his credit, and his custom, he would not have done better; for he has a double motive to do so. He has found one to beguile his dulness, to soothe care, to cheer him forward, and to stimulate him to exertion; and that, too, tenderly as the breath of May fanneth and kisseth the young leaves and flowers into life and beauty. But all this dependeth, as hath been said, upon her amiableness and prudence; for, if the wife whom a man taketh for "better for worse," possess not these indispensable requisites, he weddeth a living sorrow, he nurseth an adder in his bosom, he giveth his right hand to ruin.

Now, the wife of Walter Kerr possessed those qualities which rendereth a virtuous woman as a crown of glory to her husband. She was the daughter of a decayed farmer, and her name was Hannah Jerdan. To her the misfortunes of her parents were not such; for, while they had made her a stranger to luxury, they had introduced her to the acquaintanceship of frugality and industry. At the time she gave her hand to Walter Kerr, she was scarce twenty; and to have looked on her, you would have thought of some fair and lovely flower which sought the sequestered dale or the shaded glen, where its beauties might blush unseen—young, modest, meek, affectionate, and beautiful, man never led a lovelier bride to the altar. Her husband soon found that whatever the world might think or say of the step he had taken, he had done well and wisely. She not only became his assistant in his business, and one who took much care and anxiety from his mind, but her affection fell upon his bosom like the shadow of an angel's wing, that was spread over him to guard him from evil; and he found her, too, as a monitor whispering truth in the accents of love. If he acquired money in trade, she taught him how to keep it and profit by it—and that is a 'secret worth knowing." Let it not be supposed that she was one of those miserly beings who scrape farthings together for the sake of hoarding them. In her spirit, meanness had no place; but there were two proverbs which she never suffered herself to forget, or those around her to neglect, and those were, that "a penny saved is a penny gained," and "wilful waste makes woful want." Nor do I wonder that the latter saying took deep root in her heart; for, as having experienced privation in the days of her father's distress, there is nothing can be more painful to those who have known and felt what want is, than to see food, for want of which they were once ready to perish, wasted; and that, too, perchance, while a hunger-stricken beggar has been turned rudely from the door while he prayed for a morsel to eat. She would not see the crumbs which fell from the table wasted. In this her husband readily perceived the propriety of her conduct, and he esteemed her the more as he witnessed it; but the force of her first adage, that "a penny saved is a penny gained," he was slow to appreciate in its true light. Yet for this, perhaps, there was a reason. Previous to his marriage, he had been in the habit of spending the evening, after business hours, with a club of young tradesmen and other acquaintances. Now, habit is the pettiest and the most imperious of all tyrants. Even with a pinch of snuff it can make you its slave. It renders you miserable, until you once more bend the knee before it. But, as I have said, habit, though an imperious, is a petty tyrant; and three weeks' resolution, though you will have struggles to encounter, will enable you to snap asunder the strongest chain that ever habit forged. I do not mean the habits the seeds of which we acquire in infancy, and which grow with our growth and strengthen with our strength, and which, in fact, perform a part of our education, (though we do not admit it,) until they are set down as things belonging to or ingrafted in our natures; but I mean the habits which we acquire in after-life. And, as has been stated, Walter Kerr had acquired a habit of attending an evening club, of which he had been a member during the last year of his apprenticeship; and, from the period that he commenced business up to his marriage, and a few days after he had brought home his wife, he attended the club as usual. He was happy in the society of his young and fair wife; but still, (as we say in the north,) there was a "craiking" within him for something to make him perfectly happy, and that "craiking" was to attend the club as usual. Now, it was not a club in which they either drank deep or sat late—for it was a regulation amongst them that no man should sit in the club-room after ten o'clock, or drink more than three glasses; but, although they had this wholesome regulation, they had no by-law against what many of them called "*adjournments*," or "*sederunts*," and at which, though out of the club-room, the three glasses frequently became six.

With regard to the "sederunts," however, Hannah had no cause to complain of her husband; for he never had been one of those who formed them. Neither did she murmur, or consider herself neglected, on account of his attending the club; for she reasoned with herself, that, after the cares, toils, and business of the day, he required some relaxation; and although her company might be more agreeable to him than any other, yet she knew that the beauty and the fragrance of a flower does not increase by for ever looking upon it and on it only, but that our admiration of the flower increases, as we pass over the weeds which we behold around us. Yet, she thought that every night was too much—more than relaxation required; and she thought, also, that a shilling a-night was six shillings in the week, (for let it not be thought that a club of which Walter Kerr was a member, met on the Sabbath,) and that six shillings a-week was nearly sixteen pounds in the year—a sum that might frequently be of use when accounts became due, and money was difficult to get in. She therefore delicately and tenderly endeavoured to break her husband from the habit he had acquired; but she attempted it in vain. He believed himself to be one of the most frugal and industrious tradesmen in the town; and nothing but bringing the fact plainly and broadly before him, seemed sufficient to convince him that there was aught of expensiveness in his habits. But his wife, more delicately and efficiently, did so convince him. They were talking together of many things, and their conversation lent wings to the short hours, when, an opportunity offering, she related to him an anecdote, which brought home to himself his nightly attendance at the club; and, as I know the story to be no allegory, nor child of the brain, but a fact, I shall relate it to you.

"In a town," said she, "not many miles south of the Border, there dwelt a man who was by trade a mechanic, and who was the father of seven children. For sixteen years he had never wanted employment, (when he chose to work,) and his earnings averaged from five-and-thirty shillings to two pounds a-week. But, with a number of associates, he was in the habit of attending, daily and nightly, what they termed their house of call. In the morning, as he went to his labour, he could not pass it without having what he called his '*nipper*,' or what some of the good people in Scotland call their '*morning*,' which, being interpreted, meaneth a glass of gin, rum, or whisky." (For gentle as Hannah was, there was a sprinkling of the wag in her character.) "At midday," she added, "he had to give it another call; and to pass it on returning from his work at night was out of the question. Sometimes, and not unfrequently, when he called in for his 'nipper' in the morning, he sat down—in a room which had two windows, looking east and west—and forgot to rise until, after he had seen from the one window the sun rising, he beheld it set from the other. But it was the force of habit—it had grown in upon him, as he said; and what could the poor man do? He beheld his wife broken-hearted, going almost in rags and their affection had changed into bickerings and reproaches. His children, too, were half-starved, ill-clad, and unschooled; and for what education they got, he thought not of paying the schoolmaster—he felt nothing in hand for his money, and therefore could not see the force of the debt.

But the poor man could not help it. It was true he earned about two pounds a-week, but which way the money went he could not tell. He did not, as he thought, deserve the reproaches of his wife. His 'morning' was only fourpence, his call at midday the same, and his evening pipe and glass a shilling or eighteen-pence—that, he thought, was nothing for a man working so hard as he did; and when he did take a day now and then, he said that was not worth reckoning, for his clay could not keep together without moisture; and as for the glass or two which he took on a Sunday, why, they were not worth mentioning. Thus he could see no cause for the unhappiness of his wife, the poverty of his house, and the half-nakedness of his family. He had to "do as other people did, or he might leave their society;" and he attributed all to bad management somewhere, but not on his part. But one Sunday morning he had lingered in their house of call longer than his companions, and he was sitting there when the churchwardens and parish-officers went their rounds, and came to the house. To conceal him from them there, and avoid the penalty—

"'Tom,' said the landlady 'here be the wardens a-comin'. If they find thee here, lad, or meet thee goin' out, thou wilt be fined, and me too; and it may give my hoose a bad name. Coom up stairs, and I will shew thee through the hoose, while they examine the tap and the parlour.'

'So saying, Tom the mechanic followed the hostess from room to room, wondering at what he saw; for the furniture, as he said to himself, was like a nobleman's, and he marvelled how such things could be; and while he did so, he contrasted the splendour he beheld around him with the poverty and wretchedness of his own garret. And, after shewing him through several rooms, she at last, with a look of importance, ushered him into what she called *the drawingroom*—but, now-a-days, drawingrooms have become as common as gooseberries, and every house with three rooms and a kitchen has one. Poor Tom the mechanic was amazed as he beheld the richly-coloured and fancy-figured carpet; he was afraid to tread on it—and indeed he was told to clean his feet well before he did so. But he was more astonished when he beheld a splendid mirror, with a brightly gilded and carved frame, which reached almost from the ceiling to the floor, and in which he beheld his person, covered with his worn-out and un-holiday-like habiliments, from top to toe, though they were his only suit. Yet more was he amazed, when the ostentatious mistress of the house, opening what appeared to him a door in the wall, displayed to him rows of shining silver plate. He raised his eyes, he lifted up his hands—'Lack! Ma'am!' says he, 'how d'ye get all these mighty fine things?'

"And the landlady, laughing at his simplicity, said—'Why, lad, by fools' pennies to be sure.'

"But the words 'fools' pennies' touched his heart as if a sharp instrument had pierced it; and he thought unto himself, 'I am one of those fools;' and he turned away and left the house with the words written upon his conscience; and, as he went, he made a vow unto himself, that, until that day twelve months, he would neither enter the house he had left, nor any other house of a similar description—but that on that day twelve months he would visit it again. When he went home, his wife was surprised at his home-coming; for it was seldom he returned during the day. He had two shillings left; and taking them from his pocket, he gave them to one of his daughters, desiring her to go out and purchase a quartern loaf and a quantity of tea, sugar, and butter. His wife was silent from wonder. He took her hand and said—'Why, thou seemest to wonder at me, old lass; but I tell thee what—I have had a lesson this mornin' that I shan't forget; and when thou findest me throwing away even a penny again, I will give thee liberty to call me by any name thou likes.'

"His wife was astonished, and his family were astonished; and in the afternoon he took down the neglected and dust-covered Bible, and read a chapter aloud; though certainly not from any correct religious feeling. But he had formed the resolution to reform, and he had learned enough to know that reading his Bible was a necessary and excellent helper towards the accomplishment of his purpose. It was the happiest Sabbath his family had ever spent; and his wife said that, even on her wedding Sunday, she was not half so happy.

"But, the day twelve months from that on which he had seen the splendid furniture, the rich carpet, the gorgeous mirror, and the costly plate, arrived. It was a summer morning, and he requested his wife and children to dress before seven o'clock. During the last twelve months, his wife and his children had found it a pleasure to obey him, and they did so readily. He took the arm of his wife in his, and each of them led a younger child by the hand, while the elder walked hand in hand before them; and they went on until they came unto his former house of call; and standing opposite it, he said unto his wife—

"'Now, old woman, thou and the little ones will go in here with me for five minutes, and thou shalt see something that will please thee.'

"So they went into the house together, and Tom the mechanic found his old associates seated around the room, as he was wont to see them twelve months before, just as though they had been fixtures belonging to the establishment: and, as he, with his wife and children entered, his former companions rose, and exclaimed in wonder—'Ha! Thomas! what wind has blown thee here?' For, though they called him merely *Tom* before, he had *Thomas* from them now. And, as the landlady entered and saw a well-dressed man and woman, with seven clean and well-dressed children around them, in her tap-room, she wondered exceedingly; for their appearance contrasted strangely with that of her other customers amongst whom they were seated.

"'Why, don't you know me, Ma'am?' inquired Thomas, observing her look of curiosity and wonderment.

"'Why, I can hardly say as how I do, sir,' she replied; 'and yet I am sure I have seen you somewhere.

"'That you have, Ma'am,' answered he; 'I am your old customer, Tom Such-an-one.'

"'Lack me! is it possible!—and so you are! Why, what a change there is upon thee! thou art quite a gentleman turned. And is this lady thy wife, and these thy children? Well, now! how smart you have them all! How in the world do you manage it?'

"'O Ma'am,' said Tom the mechanic, 'nothing in the world is more easy—the *fools' pennies* which I before gave to buy your fine carpets, your mirror, and your silver plate, *I now keep in my own pocket.*' So saying, he bowed to her, and wishing her good morning, with his wife's arm in his, they and their children left the house and returned home. "Such" added Hannah, "is the true story of Tom the mechanic."

The anecdote told upon her husband; and when she had concluded, he arose and took her hand, and said—

"You were right, love. I see it now—the story of Tom the mechanic has convinced me that a penny saved is a penny gained: and I shall remember it."

Walter Kerr did remember it; and from that day he ceased his nightly visits to the club. The world prospered with him; and in a short time there was not a more thriving or a more respected merchant in the town of H—— than Walter Kerr. Every one began to say that he was greatly indebted for his good fortune to the excellent management of his wife. Even his parents at length admitted that his marrying Hannah Jerdan was the most fortunate thing that ever their son Walter did: and he himself said that she had been worth to him her weight in gold.

They had two children. Their first-born was a boy, and his name was Francis; and their daughter they had called Jacobina, after an only brother of Hannah's, and of whom

nothing had been heard for many years. No poet in his waking dreams of domestic bliss hath pictured a happier pair than were Walter Kerr and his gentle Hannah. She was unto him as a guardian spirit, an affectionate counsellor, and a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And as their children grew up in beauty before them, like fair flowers in spring, stealing day by day into loveliness, so grew their joy.

But, within eight years after his marriage, an unbidden guest—who entereth alike the palace and the cottage, whose eye pierceth through the deepest gloom of the dungeon, as he smiteth the prisoner and saith, "There is no darkness like unto my darkness"—placed his noiseless foot upon the threshold of the prosperous merchant, and with his cold and poisoned finger touched the bosom of the wife and mother.

Walter Kerr beheld his young, his beautiful, and excellent wife laid upon her dying bed, with the last breath of life quivering on her lips. His agony was the wildness, the bitterness of despair. He hung over her, he wrung his hands, he smote them on his bosom, he wept. He was as one who hath no hope, and on whom misery—deep, desolating, everlasting misery—had fallen. He would not, he could not be comforted.

"My own!—my own!" he exclaimed; "I cannot, cannot part with her!"

His was the extremeness of grief. An hour had arrived of the approach of which he had never thought, or if he had ever imagined that it would come, he had thought of it as belonging to a day that was far, far distant, and which might come when age would lead them together gently to the grave.

The young, the dying wife stretched forth her trembling and feeble hand; and as he raised it to his fevered lips—

"Weep not, dear Walter," she said, falteringly; "but, oh! when I am gone, be kind to my dear children. And should you"——she added, but her voice failed, and tears mingled with the cold dews of death upon her cheeks. But in a few moments she again added—"Walter, should you marry another, for my sake see that she be as a mother to our children."

"O Hannah!" he sobbed. Her words entered his agonized bosom like a barbed instrument, adding sorrow to sorrow, and pain to pain. He thought of her and of her only, and from the idea of another his soul revolted.

She called her children to her bedside, and she endeavoured to raise herself upon her elbow. She kissed them—she called them by their names—her last tears fell upon their cheeks and blended with theirs, and she bestowed upon them a dying mother's blessing. She took their little hands, and placing them in her husband's, gazed tenderly and imploringly on his face, and sinking back upon her pillow, with a deep sigh, her gentle spirit sought the world which is beyond death.

It was a melancholy sight to behold Walter Kerr with his young son and almost infant daughter in his hands, standing weeping over their mother's grave, while the awful, the mortal words, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," were pronounced, and the sound of the cold red earth falling on the coffin rang rudely on his ears.

For many months there walked not on the earth a more sorrowful widower. His heart, his hopes, his joys, seemed buried in the grave of her who had been his wife. His sole consolation was in his children, and he doted over them with more than a father's fondness. But he was still a young man, he was yet a prosperous one, and he had obtained the reputation of being wealthy.

His wife had been dead somewhat more than four years, when there came to reside in H—— a fair and fashionable maiden, whose name was Harriet Scott. She soon obtained the reputation of being the greatest beauty in the town, and was the favourite toast of every bachelor; amongst whom, if she did not conquer many hearts, she conquered many eyes; and if she had not lovers, she had manifold admirers. She was the daughter of an old military man, a major, belonging to some royal veteran battalion. Beautiful she certainly was; but she was vain as beautiful; and her father's pay was all that stood between her and poverty.

There are but few men, and especially mercantile men, who are used to calculate and consider consequences, that are found guilty of the folly of offering their hand to a poor and fashionable woman. What fascination the gay and beautiful Miss Scott threw over our young and rich widower—

"What dreams, what charms,
What conjuration, or what mighty magic"—

I cannot tell. The gossips of H——, at their tea parties, said she had "set her cap" at him. But I am not much acquainted with the witchcraft of "setting a cap," or how much the terms implies. This I know, that when Walter Kerr first saw Miss Harriet Scott, he thought, what every person said, "that she was very beautiful," though he also thought that she was a vain girl, conscious of her own attractions, and much too fond of dress and display. But, after he had seen her frequently, and she spoke with him familiarly, and that, too, in a voice which was almost as sweet as her face was beautiful—and when he saw, or thought he saw, that she smiled on him more frequently and more sweetly than on any one else—he began to think that she was an interesting girl, and by no means the vain creature he had at first imagined her to be. It is dangerous when a man begins to think a woman interesting. As their acquaintance grew, he discovered that she had no vanity whatever.

'She is," thought he unto himself, "the fairest and gentlest being I have met with since"——"I laid my Hannah in the dust," he would have continued; but, as the thought arose in his bosom, a tear gathered in his eyes, a low sigh escaped from him, and a glow overspread his face.

Every day, however, the beautiful Miss Scott became more interesting in the eyes of the thriving merchant, and his wealth more and more attractive to her; and in an evil hour he offered her his hand, and with a sweet blush, like the shadow of a rose leaf on a lily, the proposal was accepted.

His neighbours said, that, if his first wife had enabled him to make a fortune, he had got one who would spend it now. And they had not been husband and wife many months, until events began to shew that there was some truth in what their neighbours said. The dress of Mrs Kerr was gayer and far more costly than it had ever been as Miss Scott; though it was, from its extravagance, a subject of conversation, or what was called "a town's talk," then; and even Walter could not avoid contrasting, in his own mind, the showy and expensive attire of his living spouse with the plain and modest neatness of her who was not. She was kind enough to the children for a time; and she called them "the little creatures," and "Kerr's children." But she saw them seldom. "Not," she said, "that she disliked them, but that she could not be troubled with children being much about her."

She was not long, however, in beginning to hint that it was rather derogatory in a Major's daughter to have become the wife of a provincial shopkeeper. The smell of the goods, too, shocked her nerves, and injured her health.

"The smell from the shop hurt your nerves, dear!" said her husband—and the apartments they inhabited were immediately over the shop and warehouse—"the smell from the shop hurt you!" continued he—"that is very strange! My poor Hannah never complained of such a thing, and I'm sure many a hundred times has she stood in it from morning to night."

"Don't talk to me, sir, of your Hannah, if you please," added she; "if I threw myself away upon you, I was not to be insulted with odious comparisons about your Hannah."

"Odious, indeed!" thought Walter, with a sigh; but he durst not express what he thought; for before this he had

begun to discover the innammable materials which his wife's temper was made of.

"I tell you, Kerr," added she, "the effluvia from your shop is insupportable. It shocks my nerves continually—it is killing me altogether."

"Truly, my dear," rejoined he, "I am at a loss to understand ye. Really every other person you meet talks about their nerves, and being nervous, now-a-days. But since I can remember, there were no such words in use—that is, as they are now applied. For, when we spoke of anything being nervous, we meant something that was strong and powerful, such as a nervous sermon, or a nervous speech in the House of Commons; and if we spoke of a man of nerve, it was a strong-bodied or a strong-minded man that we meant. But now-a-days the meaning is quite reversed; and when a person is spoken of as being nervous, or very nervous, it is always in reference to some silly, shaking body, that has no nerve at all. And it is my candid opinion. dear, that nobody in this country ever complained of being troubled with the nerves, until spirit-drinking and hot tea-drinking came so much in vogue!"

"O you savage!—you barbarian!" screamed Mrs Kerr, who seemed to have been struggling with a hysteric which now came upon her. We have seen people who have a convenient habit of assuming this pride-produced malady, and Mrs Kerr was now trying the effect of the experiment upon her husband; and the violence of the pretended paroxysm increased as he manifested the more and more tenderness and anxiety to soothe her; and when she had caused him to believe that he had succeeded in restoring her to consciousness—"Kerr," said she, "we must, if you do not intend to kill me, leave this horrid house."

"Leave the house, dear!" said he in surprise—"where could we go?"

"Go!" she replied—"why don't you take or build a respectable house out of the town, where a person could receive their friends. You cannot expect any genteel person to call upon us here, to be suffocated with the fumes of your nasty shop and warehouse."

Walter was once more tempted to speak of his poor Hannah, and was about to say, that the most genteel people in the town and neighbourhood had visited her, without once hinting that there was anything disagreeable to them arising from the proximity of the shop and warehouse, or from the mixed goods which they contained. But it is a common saying, and a good one, that "second thoughts are best;" and Walter Kerr thought twice, and when he did so, he perceived that to speak of his dear and buried Hannah again, to her who now was to him as she was, would only be throwing oil upon a flame. He forbore and was silent.

I think—and so perhaps many of my readers will think—that, though a shrewd man, he was of too complying a temper. He was ready to sacrifice too much for what is called, *case* and *peace*. But in so doing, he was only like many others, whom you will find ready to say—"Oh, we are willing to do anything for the sake of peace." And no doubt this is a very good spirit; but it may be carried too far. It is quite as possible for a man to be in error by enduring too much as by allowing too little. There is a middle path in everything; and it is always the safest, and generally the best. Extremes are always bad—so bad, indeed, that they are like two wild bulls running to encounter each other, and meeting on a common path, they thrust their horns into the foreheads of each other, and thus forcibly and painfully become as one body, to the obstruction of the thoroughfare. But, that Walter Kerr was too fond of yielding, will be proved from the circumstances of his having purchased a few acres of ground, and commenced the building of a country-house, about three miles out of H——, within three months after the conversation which I have related between him and Mrs Kerr took place.

Well, the house was finished, and a very neat, and I may say elegant-looking house it was. They had a garden behind it. Immediately in front was a parterre, tastefully laid out in plots; and between the parterre and the high way was a shrubbery, which, from the number of poplar and other rapid growing trees in it, was no doubt intended in a few years, to have the designation of "a plantation" or "a wood." But, after the villa was built, Mrs Kerr discovered that new furniture was necessary for their new house.

"In truth, Harriet, my dear," said Mr Kerr, "I can in no way see that new furniture is necessary. Ye will consider it would be extremely expensive. All that we have is strong and durable; I can see no fault with it."

He would have added, "It was all of my Hannah's choosing;" but every day the power of Harriet, her fashionable successor, had increased; and, although Walter knew not whence that power came, he was but too conscious of its existence; and he spoke not what he wished to have said.

To his last remarks, she replied—"O Kerr! Kerr! when shall I get you to forget your low-life shop and counter? Why did I marry a man that has no ideas beyond saying, 'Thank you—I am much obliged to you,' to every petty penny customer! And a man of your fortune, too!—Oh, meanness!—Kerr, I am ashamed of you."

He stood out for a considerable time; but, for "the sake of peace," he had already yielded to building the villa; and what was once done. was more easily done again—therefore he agreed to fit it up with new furniture. The building and the furnishing of the house cost Mr Kerr no small sum; and his name did not stand at the Bank as worthy of credit to the amount that it once did. In his moments of solitude he thought of these things, and sighed.

Yet this was not all: when they had taken possession of the house, and Mrs Kerr had it, and the new and splendid furniture, with the garden, the parterre, and the shrubbery, there was something still wanting—and that was, a genteel *approach* to the house. Its present entrance was, as Mrs Kerr said, "no better than a gate to a cow park—as vulgar as the abominable shop and warehouse; and enough to prevent any genteel person from coming near them. Indeed, she could not ask them while they had such an *approach*."

Yield once to a woman's caprice, and you may yield always. Two instances in which he yielded have been mentioned, and he yielded a third time.

"Now," thought he, "Harrie will surely be satisfied. I have built her a fine house, and fitted it up with fine furniture, and I have made her an avenue to it that a no leman might enter. Oh, if my dear departed Hannah could look up, and see the folly into which I have been drawn, she would shake her head, and say—'Walter! Walter!'—And well she might."

And as Walter Kerr thought thus, he burst into tears.

But his wife was not content. The house, the garden, the shrubbery, the parterre, and the approach, were not enough. She wanted her genteel friends about her, now that she was in a situation to receive them; and she brought them about her. She treated them, she feasted them. They were there not only one day in the week, but every day, by dozens and by scores. Our unfortunate merchant became a cipher in his own house and at his own table. He had formerly thought what are called genteel people as rare sort of individuals, to be met with occasionally; but he now found them plentiful as gooseberries in August. They surrounded him like locusts. They were

"Thick as autumnal leaves in Vallambrosa."

And what surprised him most was, that, first one and then another said to him, during dinner, (in accordance with the absurd practice which still prevails)—"Mr Kerr, I shall be happy to drink a glass of wine with you," And scarce had he swallowed one glass, (for he always took off his heal-

taps,) until another said the same thing, and another and another, as though they had entered into concert to fire a regular *feu-de-joie* at his head; and he thought it a very hard thing that he could not take a glass of wine in his own house, without caring, or being told whether those who ate and drank at his expense, were happy at his drinking or not. Moreover, they acted as though they considered him honoured by their eating and drinking; and he saw their respect lavished on his genteel better half, while he was passed over as a sort of nobody. These were almost every-day doings, and he began to find that they were making fearful inroads on his cash account; in short, he discovered that if he had acquired a fortune rapidly during the life of his first wife, he was spending it as rapidly now.

One day, after a close examination into his books, (and it was a very beautiful day, but there had been wet weather for some time before, and the roads were bad and disagreeable to walk upon,) he returned home with the determination of saying unto his wife—"Harriet, it is impossible for me to stand the course of extravagance we are now pursuing. I shall be very happy to entertain your friends occasionally; but really this treating of them every week, I might almost say every day, is too much for any man in business to stand. Look at my profits and expenditure during the last three years." And he had a statement drawn out.

But, as I have said, this was only a speech which he intended to deliver in the presence of his wife. Scarce had he sat down in the parlour where she was, until he perceived, from her looks and manner, that there was a coming storm; and he knew that the address which he had prepared, would be ill-timed. He therefore sat in silence; but she did not long follow his example.

"Kerr," said she, "I don't know whether you mean to kill me, or what you mean to do; but I am kept here, mewed up like a prisoner."

"Me keep you mewed up, dear!" said he; "ye certainly know that ye have full scope and liberty to do as ye please—ye are mistress of your own actions."

"Me mistress of my own actions!" exclaimed she; "me go where I please!—what do ye mean? *How* can I go any where? Would you have me to go wading through the mire to visit any respectable person?"

"Certainly not, my dear," said he; "but ye can take a fine day for your visits, when it is dry under foot."

"O you brute!" exclaimed the delicate Mrs Kerr; "when shall I teach you to know anything? When shall I get your ideas carried beyond your counter? Is it not disgraceful to see you trudge, trudging into the town every day, like some poor beggar that had to work for his bread."

"Beggars dinna work, hinny," said he—"but do not be in a passion."

"Passion!" cried she; "I tell you what, Kerr—if you continue to disgrace me as you have done, I shall never set my foot upon the outside of your threshold again. Why don't you get a carriage?"

"A carriage!" he exclaimed, as though a thunderbolt had startled him in its flight.

"Yes! a carriage," she resumed—"I ask you, why don't you get one? Don't tell me you can't afford it. I know better."

"I cannot tel what ye know, love," said Mr Kerr; "but a carriage is out of the question."

"It is not out of the question," she resumed; "and question or no question, you must have one. Do you suppose I am to be kept here like a nun all my life?"

More conversation of a similar character passed between them; but it ended in this, that within two months Walter Kerr had a coachman, a carriage, and a pair of horses.

But in noticing the doings of the second Mrs Kerr, I have overlooked the situation of the children of poor Hannah. I have seen stepmothers who have been as kind to the children entrusted to their care—I have thought even more so—than if they had been their own. But such, the reader will already have imagined, was not the treatment of the children of Hannah Jerdan. Within twelve months from their father's marriage, they became subjected to daily, almost hourly scenes of cruel, petty, and capricious persecution.

But they endured their hard treatment and murmured not In the society of each other they were happy—they spoke of their mother and wept. To Jacobini she was as a dream mother—like the "dream-children" of poor matchless Elia.

But Francis remembered his mother; and by that name he could never be brought to call her who had now taken her place. Mrs Kerr, indeed, though she had no children of her own, was wont to say—

"Don't let *the creatures* call me mother."

Time had passed on until Francis was a boy, or, perhaps, I should say a youth, of nearly fourteen, and Jacobini was approaching twelve. Now, it occurred, that, at the time I refer to, she had offended her stepmother in what way I know not; but, according to the statement of the latter, it was an everyday offence—although Jacobini was a gentle child, docile as her mother was. But Mrs Kerr was in an evil humour; and after having caused her favourite serving-maid to beat the child in her presence, not satisfied with the punishment she had received, she began to chastise her herself.

The cries of little Jacobini reached the ears of her brother, who was amusing himself in the garden. Although generally a quiet, he was a bold and passionate boy. He rushed towards the house—he burst into the room where his stepmother was gratifying her cruelty and hatred on his helpless sister—he rushed forward.

"Woman!" he cried, in the manner of one whose reason has left him, "if you strike my sister, I will strike you!"

"Boy!" she exclaimed, in a frenzy; and struck not only his sister again, but him too, and applied epithets to both, which, for the sake of human nature, it is as well not to repeat.

I have said that he was bold and passionate—he was also a tall and strong boy for his years. He grasped her more fiercely, and as she continued to vent her rage on both, and to strike at both, he dashed her to the floor, and exclaimed again—

"Woman! if you strike my sister, I will strike you!"

At that moment his father entered the house. Hysterics again came to plead the cause of Mrs Kerr. Walter had seen enough. He seized hold upon his son. He chastised him—unmercifully he did so; for he also, on occasions, was a man of violent passions; but, as with augmented rage he struck his son, the boy, while he submitted patiently to his chastisement, gazed in his face with a tearless and stern eye; and when he had exhausted his rage and strength, the boy turned on him and said—"Are you done, sir? I shall tell my mother this!—my mother!"

When Walter Kerr heard the words—"I shall tell *my mother*," and especially the words "my mother," pronounced by his son, and the emphatic manner in which they were pronounced, he trembled—his heart filled—he burst into tears, and stretching out his hand, he said—"Francis!"

But the boy exclaimed—"No!" refused the offered hand, and rushed out of the room.

Throughout the day he was not again seen; and after many days of diligent search after him had been made, it was ascertained that he had entered on board of a foreign trading vessel from Newcastle. Twelve months passed, and the vessel again arrived in Newcastle; but the captain stated that the astonishing boy (as he termed Francis) had left him, he knew not for why, nor for where, while they were upon the coast of Africa, where many vessels were.

The tidings fell sadly on the heart of Walter Kerr; but he had other evils to contend with. He had lost his son; and with his villa, his grounds, his carriage, and his visiters, he had lost the half of his fortune. But the ambition of Mrs Kerr was not yet satisfied. Her husband did not possess landed property sufficient to think of being a Justice of the Peace for the county; yet she thought it would give her additional importance were he chief magistrate in the town of H——. I will not say that Mr Kerr had not a sprinkling of ambition in his composition himself, and he more readily agreed that he should aspire to the honour of being elevated to the bench, than to any other whim that she had proposed to him. Therefore, after bestowing the necessary and customary (though illegal) fees on the corporators, which made another fearful inroad on his monied property, Mr Kerr had the honour and gratification of being elected chief magistrate of the town of H——.

"Now," thought he, "Harriet will surely have reached the height of her ambition; she will be content now."

But he was mistaken. She not only discovered that the idea of a magistrate standing behind a counter, and working amongst bales of goods, or casks of sundry liquors, was intolerable, but she declared that the effluvia which he brought with him from his warehouse on his hands and garments, was quite as obnoxious as though she still lived over it. And further, she added, that you might as well attempt to wash the Ethiopian white as wash it away. It rendered her incapable of taking her dinner every day.

Once again, Walter Kerr gave way, "for the sake of peace." He gave a share in his business to a shopman who had been with him for many years, and became a sleeping partner himself. Jacobini was now a lovely girl of seventeen; but her persecution had increased with her years, until it became insupportable. She was treated not only as a servant but as a slave. Her father beheld what she endured, and he thought of the dying injunction of his Hannah, and sighed; but his interposition tended only to increase the sufferings which his daughter endured.

Jacobini possessed all the meekness and patience which had characterised her mother; but she was persecuted beyond their endurance. She tied up a few of her clothes, the plainest that she had, and with the little money which she had been enabled to gather together, she left her father's house at the dead of night, and, wandering towards the next town, took her journey to London, where, through the instrumentality of a friend of her mother's, she was in a few days hired as child's-maid to a merchant in the city.

Her gentle disposition and acquirements soon rendered her a favourite with the family; and when they ascertained her history, she became as one of them.

About this time there was a young man, one William Jerdan, came from India to be initiated in the mysteries of business by her master. It was soon evident that he was no uninterested beholder of the gentleness and beauty of Jacobini. There was, perhaps, something of the ardent temperament of the clime in which he was born in his composition; and he suddenly made a declaration of his affection with an enthusiasm which, while it perhaps pleased, at the same time intimidated the retiring and the timid Jacobini. She therefore listened not to his words, and sought to avoid him. But the more her reserve grew, and the more she endeavoured to shun his presence, the more earnest became his entreaties, and the more ardent his declarations of affection. Thus several months passed, and there was a whisper in her heart, that she could love him, that she *did* love him; but she endeavoured to conquer it. She had often corresponded with her brother, and given him an account of all that she had endured since the day of his departure. He was now commander of a large vessel trading between India and the States of America. She had written to him on the day after her arrival in London; and about eight months afterwards received from him the following letter. It was addressed to the care of the friend who had procured her the situation:—

New York, August 15th, 18—.

"My Dear Sister,—I cannot describe to you what were my feelings on receiving your letter, which communicated to me the tidings that you also had been forced to flee from our father's house. It is perhaps sinful in me to do so, but I cannot avoid hating the woman whom our father would have us to call mother; not on account of her conduct to me, (though it was cruel enough,) for I always despised her—but, O Jacobini! it was because she was so unlike *our* mother, whom I remember better than you can, and whom I suppose you will now resemble as she lives in my memory—for all who saw you said, you 'were her picture;' but it is because of her cruelty to you that I hate her. The thought that you have been compelled to fly more than three hundred miles from our father's house, and that your only hope is becoming the servant of our equals! Sister, when I received your letter and read this, it cost me a sleepless night; I cried like a child—and sailors do not shed tears for trifles. Yea, though I am no Catholic, I prayed that *our* mother's spirit might watch over you and protect you, my sister! But I cannot endure the thought of your being a menial in the house of any one. With this, therefore, you will receive a draft for £100 upon the agents of my owners, payable at sight. The moment that you get it cashed, leave service, or I shall be angry.

"But now, my own sister, I have something else to tell you of. You know that our dear mother had a brother called James, and after whom you were named. He went to sea when but a boy, and was not again heard of. It was rumoured, and believed, that he and his shipmates were taken by pirates, and that they became a part of them. The story was not true. Eighteen months ago, I was in Bengal, and had dealings with a merchant, who, hearing the Scottish or rather the Border accent on my tongue, asked me from whence I came. I informed him; and he then, with a degree of curiosity, inquired who was my father, who my mother. When I spoke of our father—'I remember him well,' he said; 'Wat Kerr—why, he was my school and class-fellow!' But when I told him of our mother, and who she was, there was a visible paleness on his sunburnt face; sweat stood in drops upon his brow, he gasped in his eagerness to hear me, and exclaimed—'Youth! youth! does your mother live?' 'Oh, no!' I answered; and the tears gushed into my eyes. sister. Come to me! come to me! my sister's child!' he cried, and he threw his arms around my neck. Jacobini, it was our uncle—our mother's brother. And when I had told him all, and how and why I had left the house, and spoke of you, and of your being named after him—'If I live,' said he, 'for two years more I shall see my little niece, my namesake—she shall be my daughter. He had been many years a prisoner, and on obtaining his liberty became a sort of secretary to a nabob in India. He had written repeatedly to his parents; but he received no answer, for ere then they were dead; and his sister—our mother—he knew not whether she lived, where she was, or by what name she might be found. He is now a widower, and has an only son, nearly my age. Our cousin, Jacobini, is a noble, kind-hearted fellow. I should have loved him though he had been no relative of mine, from the moment I became acquainted with him. His name is William, and before this reaches you, he will be in London where you are; for, when I last left Bengal, he was preparing to go to London, to be thoroughly instructed in the rules of business. He was to be in the house of one Mr L——, in Throgmorton Street. By inquiring there, you will easily find him; and the moment you receive this, call upon him—he will rejoice in having found you—he will protect you until I see you, which will

be in the course of next year; for, after again going to Bengal, I have a voyage to make to England; and our uncle has promised to accompany me. Therefore, within twelve months, we shall meet again. Remember me to my cousin when you find him, which you will easily do. You may shew him this letter; and when he has seen it, I am sure you will find in him a warm and a steadfast friend, and one who will not endure the degradation of your remaining an hour in a state of servitude.

"Farewell, dear and only sister, until we meet; and if you ever hear from our father, tell him that I yet live, that I think of him, and love him—but, O Jacobini! the *woman* that rules his house, renders it impossible that I can again enter it. Write to him that I shall meet him in London next year, but he must not bring *her*. Again, farewell, dear sister—wait upon our cousin with this letter; it will be an agreeable surprise—and I am, ever, your affectionate brother,

"Francis Kerr."

Such was the letter which Jacobini received from her brother. But it would be a vain task to describe her feelings, on its perusal. From it she found that her lover and cousin—he whom she *did* love, though she shewed it not, and whom she sought to avoid—was one and the same person. She was commanded to shew the letter to *him!*

"To *him!*" said Jacobini; "I cannot." And yet while she so said she wept with joy. She went not to him—nor needed she; for, as was his wont, within an hour he threw himself in her way—for he watched her every movement. She had never spoken to him unkindly, (for it was not in her nature,) but always coldly. She had the letter in her hand, and she was weeping over it when he saw her.

"Why does my Jacobini weep?" said he: "if aught distresses her why refuse the friendship and the hand of one who is ready to bear your sorrows and protect you?"

"William," she said, falteringly—and it was the first time she had called him by that name—"read, read this." And she put the letter into his hands.

He took it—his eyes eagerly glanced over it; but before he had finished it, he flung his arms round her neck, and exclaimed—"My cousin!—my Jacobini!—mine!"

Her face fell upon his bosom, and she wept. Few words were spoken between them; but they understood each other. He took her hand in his, and still holding the letter, he led her to the room of her master and his mercantile instructor. They were both in tears as they approached him.

"Master William," said the merchant, with a look of surprise, "what's the meaning of this?"

William put the letter which his fair cousin had received into his hands. The merchant perused it.

"Miss Kerr," said he, "I am sorry that I was not sooner acquainted with your history. If you will, you shall still remain in my house, as a friend, but not as a menial. My opinion of your cousin William, though I say it before him, agrees with your brother's. Whatever his faults are, they belong to his head, not to his heart, and a little experience will correct them. I believe I have seen more between you, at least on his part, Jacobini, than your brother knows. But hitherto, while I discouraged, I was not displeased at the affection which I saw my young *protegé* manifested towards you. And when my friend, your uncle and his father," (for he spoke to Jacobini,) "arrives in England, I shall rejoice not only in being able to introduce to him his niece, but in recommending a daughter."

As the merchant spoke, William and Jacobini hung their heads, and tears and blushes were on their cheeks together.

She remained in the house; and I need hardly say, that her cousin now looked upon her as his betrothed; and in the same manner did she regard him.

Before twelve months went round, her brother and her uncle arrived in London. It would be a vain task in me to picture their interview—to describe their joy—to pourtray their surprise. The reader will imagine it more vividly. Why should I tell how the brother wept upon the neck of his sister, and how her tears fell on his bosom; or how the merchant drew her uncle aside, and in a few words told him the affection that existed between his son and his niece, and of the worth of both. Nor need I tell how James Jerdan, after listening to the merchant, came forward with a full heart, and in one hand taking the hand of his niece, and in the other that of his son, joined them, saying—"Bless my children!"

Within a month, the indissoluble knot was tied between William and Jacobini, and they went down to Scotland to spend their honeymoon, her brother accompanying them; but her father-in-law refused to go with them, as he thought his presence might not be acceptable to her who was now the wife of his late sister's husband.

Jacobini had never heard from her father, though she had often written to him since she left his house. But from the day that she departed, ruin had followed fast upon him. When he left his business, because his wife was ashamed of it, business became ashamed of him. Her extravagance increased, and his property decreased. His villa, his carriage, his all that never should have belonged to him, became a jest among his neighbours. He was declared a bankrupt—he was cast into prison. The villa and the surrounding grounds were sold, the carriage was sold, and his wife went to reside with her father, who was then upon his death-bed.

When Jacobini, her husband, and her brother, arrived in H——, they found their father a captive in a prison-house. They entered the prison to see him; and when he beheld them, he knew only his daughter. But they all, they each embraced him; they called him "Father!" and the poor man wept, even as a child weeps. He spoke of their mother—he entreated their forgiveness: but his son and his daughter clung around his neck, and cried—"Say nothing, father!"

They sent for his solicitor. His son and his son-in-law paid his debts in the prison. They led him out in their arms. They sent for his wife, the gay Miss Scott, that was their cruel stepmother; her father had died about a week before, and she was left destitute, having ruined her husband.

"I will support my father," said Francis; "but I will have nothing to do with maintaining *that woman*"—for she had been sent for against his wish.

"Then I will support her," said Jacobini—"William, will not you?" she added, addressing her husband. "Let bygones be bygones—she is my father's wife—she must have cared for me before I could have cared for myself."

"Yes, love, yes, we will support her," said her husband.

They did as they had said. Walter Kerr lived in comfort on an annuity which his children allowed him; and his wife, while she partook of it, repented because of her extravagance, and because of her cruelty to those from whose bounty she was now fed. Jacobini went with her husband and her father-in-law to India, where in a few years a happy family gamboled around them, and Francis increased in wealth, but lived a bachelor, and left his property to his sister's children.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS

THE GUIDWIFE OF COLDINGHAM;

OR,

THE SURPRISE OF FAST CASTLE.

NEAR where St Abb stretches in massive strength into the sea, still terrible, even in ruins, may be seen the remains of Fast Castle, one of the most interesting in its history—as it is the most fearfully romantic in its situation—of all the mouldering strongholds which are still to be traced among the Borders, like monuments of war, crumbling into nothingness beneath the silent but destroying touch of time. After the death of the bluff Harry the Eighth of England, who had long kept many of the corruptible amongst the Scottish nobility and gentry in his pay, the ambitious Somerset, succeeding to the office of guardian of the young king, speedily, under the name of Protector, acquired an authority nothing inferior to the power of an absolute monarch. He had not long held the reins of government when he rendered it evident that it was a part of his ambition to subdue Scotland, or the better portion of it, into a mere province of England.

The then governor of Scotland, Hamilton, Earl of Arran, (for Queen Mary was but a child,) was not ignorant of the designs of Somerset, and every preparation was made to repel him on his crossing the Borders. It was drawing towards evening on the first of September 1547, when the Protector, at the head of an army of eighteen thousand men, arrived at Berwick; and nearly at the same instant, while the gloaming yet lay light and thin upon the sea, a fleet, consisting of thirty-four vessels of war, thirty transports, and a galley, were observed sailing round Emmanuel's head—the most eastern point of Holy Island. On the moment that the fleet was perceived, St Abb's lighted up its fires, throwing a long line of light along the darkening sea, from the black shore to the far horizon: and scarce had the first flame of its alarm-fire waved in the wind, till the Dow Hill repeated the fiery signal; and, in a few minutes, Domilaw, Dumprender, and Arthur's Seat, exhibited tops of fire as the night fell down on them, bearing the tidings, as if lightnings flying on different courses revealed them through Berwickshire and the Lothians, and enabling Roxburghshire and Fife to read the tale; while Binning's Craig, repeating the telegraphic fire, startled the burghers of Linlithgow on the one hand, and on the other aroused the men of Lanarkshire.

Before, therefore, the vessels had arrived in the bay, or the Protector's army had encamped in the Magdalen Fields around Berwick—Berwickshire, Roxburgh, the Lothians, Fife, and Lanark, were in arms. The cry from the hills and in the glens was, "The enemy is come!—the English!—to arms!" The shepherd drove his flocks to the inaccessible places in the mountains; he threw down his crook and grasped his spear.

At the same time that Somerset crossed the Borders on the east, the Earl of Lennox, who, from disappointed ambition, had proved false to his country, entered it at the head of another English army to the west.

But I mean not to write a history of Somerset's invasion—of the plausible proposals which he made, and which were rejected—nor of the advantages which the Scots, through recklessness or want of discipline, flung away, and of the disasters which followed. All the places of strength upon the Borders fell into his hands, and he garrisoned them from his army, and set governors over them. The first place of his attack was Fast Castle; in which, after taking possession of it, he left a governor and strong garrison, composed of English troops and foreign mercenaries, causing also the people around, for their own safety, to take to him an oath of fealty, renouncing their allegiance to the young queen. But while there were many who obeyed his command with reluctance, there were others who chose rather to endanger or forfeit their lives and property than comply with it. It had not, however, been two years in the hands of the English, when, by a daring and desperate act of courage, it was wrested from them.

A decree went forth from the English governor of the Castle, commanding them to bring into it, from time to time, all necessary provisions for the use of the garrison, for which they should receive broad money in return; for Somerset and his chief officers—the Lord Grey and others—had caused it to be published, that they considered the inhabitants of that part of Scotland as the subjects of young Edward, in common with themselves, and not as a people with whom they were at war, or from whom their soldiers might collect provisions, and pay them with the sword.

The English, indeed, paid liberally for whatsoever they received; and there was policy in their so doing, for there were not a few who preferred lucre to their country, and the effigy of a prince upon a coin to allegiance to their lawful monarch. But, while such obeyed with alacrity the command of the governor of Fast Castle to bring provisions to his garrison, there were many others who acquiesced in it reluctantly, and only obeyed from the consciousness that disobedience would be the price of their lives.

At this period, there dwelt in Coldingham a widow named Madge Gordon. She was a tall and powerful woman, and her years might be a little below fifty. Daily she indulged in invectives against the English, and spoke contemptuously of the spirit of her countrymen, in submitting to the mandate of the governor of Fast Castle. She had two cows and more than a score of poultry; but she declared that she would spill the milk of the one upon the ground every day, and throw the eggs of the other over the cliffs, rather than that either the one or the other should be taken through the gates of the Castle while an English garrison held it.

Often, therefore, as Madge beheld her neighbours carrying their baskets on their arms, their creels or sacks upon

their backs, or driving their horses, laden with provisions, towards the Castle, her wrath would rise against them, and she was wont to exclaim—

"O ye slaves!—ye base loun-hearted beasts o' burden!—hoo lang will ye boo before the hand that strikes ye, or kiss the foot that tramples on ye? Throw doun the provisions, and gang hame and bring what they better deserve—for, if ye will gie them bread, feed them on the point o' yer faithers' spears."

Some laughed as Madge spoke; but her words sank deep into the hearts of others; and a few answered—

"Ye are as daft as ever, Madge—but a haverel woman's tongue is nae scandal, and ye ken that the governor winna tak cognizance o' ye."

"Me ken or care for him, ye spiritless coofs, ye!" she replied; "gae tell him that Madge Gordon defies him and a' his men, as she despises you, and wad shake the dirt frae her shoon at baith the ane and the other o' ye. Shame fa' ye, ye degenerate, mongrel race! for, if ye had ae drap o' the bluid o' the men in yer veins wha bled wi' Wallace and wi' Bruce, before the sun gaed doun, the flag o' bonny Scotland wad wave frae the Castle towers."

"Mother! mother!" said an interesting-looking girl of nineteen, who had come to the door as the voice of Madge waxed louder and more bitter—"dinna talk foolishly—ye will bring us a' into trouble."

"Trouble! ye silly lassie, ye!" rejoined Madge; "these are times indeed to talk o' the like o' us being brought into trouble, when our puir bluiding country is groaning beneath the yoke o' an enemy, and we see them harrying us not only oot o' hoose and ha', but even those that should be our protectors oot o' their manhood! See," added she, "do ye see wha yon is, skulking as far as he can get frae our door wi' the weel-filled sack upon his shouthers? It is yer ain dearie, Florence Wilson! O the betrayer o' his country!—He's a coward, Janet, like the rest o' them, and shall ne'er ca' ye his wife while I live to ca' ye daughter."

"O mother!" added the maiden, in a low and agitated voice—"what could poor Florence do? It isna wi' a man body as it is wi' the like o' us. If he didna do as the lave do, he wad be informed against, and he maun obey or die!"

"Let him die, then, as a man, as a Scotchman!" said the stern Guidwife of Coldingham.

Florence Wilson, of whom Madge had spoken, was a young man of three or four and twenty, and who then held, as his fathers had done before him, sheep-lands under the house of Home. He was one of those who obeyed reluctantly the command of the governor to bring provisions to the garrison; and, until the day on which Madge beheld him with the sack upon his shoulders, he had resisted doing so. But traitors had whispered the tale of his stubbornness and discontent in the Castle; and, in order to save himself and his flocks, he that day took a part of his substance to the garrison. He had long been the accepted of Janet Gordon; and the troubles of the times alone prevented them, as the phrase went, from "commencing house together." He well knew the fierce and daring patriotism of his intended mother-in-law, and he took a circuitous route, in order to avoid passing her door laden with a burden of provisions for the enemy. But, as has been told, she perceived him.

In the evening, Florence paid his nightly visit to Janet.

"Out! out! ye traitor!" cried Madge, as she beheld him crossing her threshold; "the shadow o' a coward shall ne'er fall on my floor while I hae a hand to prevent it."

"I'm nae coward, guidwife," retorted Florence indignantly.

"Nae coward!" she rejoined; "what are ye, then? Did not I, this very day, wi' my ain een, behold ye skulking and carrying provisions to the enemy!"

"Ye might," said Florence—"but ae man canna tak a castle, nor drive frae it five hundred enemies. Bide ye yet. Foolhardy courage isna manhood; and, had mair prudence and caution, and less confidence, been exercised by our army last year, we wouldna hae this day to mourn owre the battle o' Pinkie. I tell ye, therefore, again, just bide ye yet."

"Come in, Florence," said Madge; "draw in a seat and sit doun, and tell me what ye mean."

"Hoots, Florence," said Janet, in a tone partaking of reproach and alarm, "are ye gaun to be as daft as my mother? What matters it to us wha's king or wha's queen?—it will be lang or either the ane or the ither o' them do onything for us. When ye see lords and gentry in the pay o' England, and takin its part, what can the like o' you or my mother do?"

"Do! ye chicken-hearted trembler at yer ain shadow!" interrupted Madge—"though somewhat past its best, I hae an arm as strong and healthy as the best o' them, and the blood that runs in it is as guid as the proudest o' them."

Now, the maiden name of Madge was Home; and when her pride was touched, it was her habit to run over the genealogical tree of her father's family, which she could illustrate upon her fingers, beginning, on all occasions—"I am, and so is every Home in Berwickshire, descended frae the Saxon kings o' England and the first Earls o' Northumberland." Thus did she run on, tracing their descent from Crinan, chief of the Saxons in the north of England, to Maldredus his son, who married Algatha, daughter of Uthred, prince of Northumberland, and granddaughter of Ethelrid, king of England; and from Maldredus to his son Cospatrick, of whose power William the Conqueror became jealous, and who was, therefore, forced to fly into Scotland in the year 1071, where Malcolm Canmore bestowed on him the manor of Dunbar, and many baronies in Berwickshire. Thus did she notice three other Cospatricks, famous and mighty men in their day, each succeeding Cospatrick, the son of his predecessor; and after them a Waldreve, and a Patrick, whose son William marrying his cousin, he obtained with her the lands of Home, and, assuming the name, they became the founders of the clan. From the offspring of the cousin, the male of whom took the name of Sir William Home, and from him through eleven other successors, down to George, the fourth Lord Home, who had fallen while repelling the invasion of Somerset a few months before, did Madge trace the roots, shoots, and branches of her family, carrying it back through a period of more than six hundred years; and she glowed, therefore, with true aristocratic indignation at the remark of her daughter to Florence—"What can the like o' you or my mother do?" And she concluded her description of her genealogical tree, by saying—"Talk noo the like o' yer mother, hizzy!"

"Aweel, mother," said Janet mildly—"that may a' be, but there is nae cause for you fleeing into a tift upon the matter, for nae harm was meant. I only dinna wish Florence to be putting his life in jeopardy for neither end nor purpose. I'm sure I wish that oor nobility would keep to their bargain, and allow the queen, though she is but a lassie yet, to be married to young King Edward, and then we might hae peace in the land, and ither folk would be married as weel as them."

"We shall be married, Janet, my doo," said Florence, gazing on her tenderly—"only ye bide a wee."

Now, it must not be thought that Janet loved her country less than did her mother or her betrothed husband; but, while the land of blue mountains was dear to her heart, Florence Wilson was yet more dear; and it was only because they were associated with thoughts of him that they became as a living thing, as a voice and as music in her bosom. For, whence comes our fondness for the woods, the mountains, the rivers of nativity, but from the fond remembrances which their associations conjure up, and the visions which they recall to

the memory of those who were dear to us, but who are now far from us, or with the dead? We may have seen more stupendous mountains, nobler rivers, and more stately woods —but they were not *ours!* They were not the mountains, the rivers, and the woods, by which we played in childhood, formed first friendships, or breathed love's tender tale in the ear of her who was beautiful as the young moon or the evening star, which hung over us like smiles of heaven; nor were they the mountains, the woods, and the rivers, near which our kindred, the flesh of our flesh, and the bone of our bone, SLEEP! But I digress.

"Tell me, Florence," said Madge, "what mean ye by 'bide a wee?' Is there a concerted project amongst ony o' ye, an' are ye waiting for an opportunity to carry it into effect?"

"No," answered he, "I canna say as how we hae devised ony practicable scheme o' owrecoming our oppressors as yet; but there are hundreds o' us ready to draw our swords an' strike, on the slightest chance o' success offering—and the chance may come."

"An' amongst the hundreds o' hands ye speak o'," returned Madge, "is there no a single head that can plot an' devise a plan to owrecome an' drive our persecutors frae the Castle?"

"I doot it—at least I hae ne'er heard ony feasible-like plan proposed," said Florence, sorrowfully.

Madge sat thoughtful for a few minutes, her chin resting on her hand. At length she inquired—"When go ye back to sell provisions to them again?"

"This day week," was the reply.

"Then I shall tak my basket wi' eggs an butter, an' gae wi' ye," answered Madge.

"O mother! what are ye sayin?" cried Janet: 'ye maun gang nae sic gate. I ken yer temper wad flare up the moment ye heard a word spoken against Scotland, or a jibe broken on it; an' there is nae tellin what might be the consequence."

"Leave baith the action an' the consequence to me, Janet, my woman," said the patriotic mother; "as I brew, I will drink. But ye hae naething to fear; I will be as mim in the Castle as ye wad be if gieing Florence yer hand in the kirk."

The day on which the people were again to carry provisions to the garrison in Fast Castle arrived; and, to the surprise of every one, Madge, with a laden basket on each arm, mingled amongst them. Many marvelled, and the more mercenary said—

"Ay, ay!—Madge likes to turn the penny as weel as ither folk. The English will hae guid luck if ony o' them get a bargain oot o' her baskets."

She, therefore, went to the Castle, bearing provisions with the rest of the peasantry; but, under pretence of disposing of her goods to the best advantage, she went through and around the Castle, and quitted it not until she had ascertained where were its strongest, where its weakest points of defence, and in what manner it was guarded.

When, therefore, Florence Wilson again visited her dwelling, she addressed him, saying—

"Noo, I hae seen oor enemies i' the heart o' their strength; an' I hae a word to say to ye that will try yer courage, an' the courage o' the hunders o' guid men an' true that ye hae spoken o' as only bidin their time to strike. Noo, is it yer opinion that, between Dunglass an' Eyemouth, ye could gather a hundred men willing an' ready to draw the sword for Scotland's right, an' to drive the invaders frae Fast Castle, if a feasible plan were laid before them?"

"I hae nae doot o't," replied he.

"Doots winna do," said she; "will ye try it?"

"Yes," said he.

"Florence, ye *shall* be my son," added she, taking his hand—"I see there is spirit in ye yet.

"Mother," said Janet, earnestly, 'what dangerous errand is this ye wad set him upon?—what do ye think it could matter to me wha was governor o' Fast Castle, if Florence should meet his death in the attempt?"

"Wheesht! ye silly lassie, ye," replied her mother; "had I no borne ye, I wad hae said that ye hadna a drap o' my bluid i' yer veins. What is't that ye fear? If they'll abide by my counsel, though it may try their courage, oor purpose shall be accomplished wi' but little scaith."

"Neither fret nor fear, dear," said Florence, addressing Janet; "I hae a hand to defend my head, an' a guid sword to guard baith." Then turning to her mother, he added—"An' what may be yer plan, that I may communicate it to them that I ken to be zealous in oor country's cause?"

"Were I to tell ye noo," said she, "that ye might communicate it to them, before we were ready to put it in execution, the story wad spread frae the Tweed to John o' Groat's, and frae St Abb's to the Solway, and our designs be prevented. Na, lad, my scheme maun be laid before a the true men that can be gathered together, at the same moment, an' within a few hours o' its being put in execution. Do ye ken the dark copse aboon Houndwood, where there is a narrow and crooked opening through the tangled trees, but leading to a bit o' bonny green sward, where a thousand men might encamp unobserved?"

"I do," answered Florence.

"And think ye that ye could assemble the hundred men ye speak o' there, on this night fortnight?"

"I will try," replied he.

"Try, then," added she, "and I will meet ye there before the new moon sink behind the Lammermoors."

It was a few days after this that Madge was summoned to the village of Home, to attend the funeral of a relative; and while she was yet there, the castle of her ancestors was daringly wrested from the hands of the Protector's troops, by an aged kinsman of her own, and a handful of armed men. The gallant deed fired her zeal more keenly, and strengthened her resolution to wrest Fast Castle from the hands of the invaders. She had been detained at Home until the day on which Florence Wilson was to assemble the stout-hearted and trust-worthy in the copse above Houndwood. Her kindred would have detained her longer; but she resisted their entreaties and took leave of them, saying that "her bit lassie, Janet, would be growing irksome wi' being left alane, an' that, at ony rate, she had business on hand that couldna be delayed."

She proceeded direct to the place of rendezvous, without going onwards to her own house; and, as she drew near the narrow opening which led to the green space in the centre of the dark copse, the young moon was sinking behind the hills. As she drew cautiously forward, she heard the sound of voices, which gradually became audible.

"Well, Florence," said one, "what are ye waiting for? Where is the grand project that ye was to lay before us?"

"Florence," said others, "let us proceed to business. It is gaun to be very dark, and ye will remember we have to gang as far as the Peaths* the night yet."

Florence answered as one perplexed, but in his wonted words—"Hae patience—bide a wee;" and added, in a sort of soliloquy, but loud enough to be overheard by his companions—"She promised to be here before the moon gaed down upon the Lammermoors."

"Wha did?—wha promised to be here?" inquired half a dozen voices.

"I did!" cried Madge, proudly, as she issued from the narrow aperture in the copse, and her tall figure was revealed by the fading moonbeams. With a stately step, she walked into the midst of them, and gazed round as though

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The Pease Bridge.

the blood and dignity of all the Homes had been centred in her own person.

"Weel, Madge," inquired they, "and, since ye are come, for what hae ye brought us here?"

"To try," added she, "whether, inheriting, as ye do, yer faithers' bluid, ye also inherit their spirit—to see whether ye hae the manhood to break the yoke o' yer oppressors, or if ye hae the courage to follow the example which the men o' Home set ye the other nicht."

"What have they done?" inquired Florence.

"Hearken," said she, "ane and a' o' ye, and I will tell ye; for, wi' my ain een, I beheld a sicht that was as joyfu' to me as the sight o' a sealed pardon to a condemned criminal. Ye weel ken that, for near twa years, the English have held Home Castle, just as they still hold Fast Castle beside us. Now, it was the other nicht, and just as the grey gloam was darkening the towers, that an auld kinsman o' mine, o' the name o' Home, scaled the walls where they were highest, strongest, and least guarded; thirty gallant countrymen had accompanied him to their foot, but, before they could follow his example, he was perceived by a sentinel, wha shouted out—'To arms!—to arms!' 'Cower, lads, cower!' said my auld kinsman, in a sort o' half whisper, to his followers; and he again descended the wall, and they lay down, with their swords in their hands, behind some whin bushes at the foot o' the battlements. There was running, clanking, and shouting through the castle for a time; but, as naething like the presence o' an enemy was either seen or heard, the sentry that had raised the alarm was laughed at, and some gaed back to their beds, and others to their wine. But, after about two hours, and when a'thing was again quiet, my kinsman and his followers climbed the walls, and, rushing frae sentinel to sentinel, they owrecam ane after anither before they could gie the alarm to the garrison in the castle; and, bursting into it, shouted—'Hurra!—Scotland and Home for ever!' Panic seized the garrison; some started frae their sleep—others reeled frae their cups—some grasped their arms—others ran, they knew not where—but terror struck the hearts o' ane and a'; and still, as the cry 'Scotland and Home for ever!' rang frae room to room, and was echoed through the lang high galleries, it seemed like the shouting o' a thousand men; and, within ten minutes, every man in the garrison was made prisoner or put to the sword! And noo, neebors, what my kinsman and a handfu' o' countrymen did for the deliverance o' the Castle o' Home, can ye not do for Fast Castle, or will ye not—and so drive every invader oot o' Berwickshire?"

"I dinna mean to say, Madge," answered one, who appeared to be the most influential personage amongst her auditors—"I dinna mean to say but that your relation and his comrades hae performed a most noble and gallant exploit—one that renders them worthy o' being held in everlasting remembrance by their countrymen—and glad would I be if we could this night do the same for Fast Castle. But, woman, the thing is impossible; the cases are not parallel. It mightna be a difficult matter to scale the highest part o' the walls o' Home Castle, and ladders could easily be got for that purpose; but, at Fast Castle, wi' the draw-brig up, and the dark, deep, terrible chasm between you and the walls, like a bottomless gulf between time and eternity!—I say, again, for my part, the thing is impossible. Wha has strength o' head, even for a moment, to look doun frae the dark and dizzy height o' the Wolf's Crag?—and wha could think o' scaling it? Even if it had been possible, the stoutest heart that ever beat in a bosom would, wi' the sickening horror o' its owner's situation, before he was half-way up, be dead as the rocks that would dash him to pieces as he fell! Na, na, I should hae been glad to lend a helping and a willing hand to ony practicable plan, but it would be madness to throw away our lives where there couldna be the slightest possibility o' success."

"Listen," said Madge; "I ken what is possible, and what is impossible, as weel as ony o' ye I meant that ye should tak for example the dauntless spirit o' my kinsman and the men o' Home, and no their manner o' entering the castle. But, if yer hearts beat as their hearts did, before this hour the morn's nicht, the invaders will be driven frae Fast Castle. In the mornin we are ordered to take provisions to the garrison. I shall be wi' ye, and in the front o ye. But, though my left arm carries a basket, beneath my cloak shall be hidden the bit sword which my guidman wore in the wars against King Harry; and, as I reach the last sentinel—'Now, lads! now for Scotland and our Queen!' I shall cry; and wha dare follow my example?"

"I dare! I will!" said Florence Wilson, "and be at yer side to strike doun the sentinel; and sure am I that there isna a man here that winna do or die, and drive owre enemies frae the Castle, or leave his body within its wa's for them to cast into the sea. Every man o' us, the morn, will enter the Castle wi' arms concealed aboot him, and hae them ready to draw and strike at a moment's warning. Ye canna say, freends, but what this is a feasible plan, and ye winna be outdone in bravery by a woman. Do ye agree to it?"

There were cries of—"Yes, Florence, yes!—every man o' us!"—and "It is an excellent plan—it is only a pity that it hadna been thocht o' suner," resounded on all sides; but "Better late than never," said others.

"Come round me, then," said Madge; and they formed a circle around her. "Ye swear now," she continued, "in the presence o' Him who see'th through the darkness o' night and searcheth the heart, that nane o' ye will betray to oor enemies what we hae this nicht determined on; but that every man o' ye will, the morn, though at the price o' his life, do yer utmost to deliver owre groaning country frae the yoke o' its invaders and oppressors! This ye swear?"

And they bowed their heads around her.

"Awa, then," added she, "ilka man to his ain hoose, and get his weapons in readiness." And, leaving the copse, they proceeded in various directions across the desolate moor. But Florence Wilson accompanied Madge to her dwelling; and, as they went, she said—

"Florence, if ye act as weel the morn as ye hae spoken this nicht, the morn shall my dochter, Janet, be yer wife, wi' a fu' purse for her portion that neither o' ye kens aboot."

He pressed her hand in the fulness of his heart; but she added—

"Na, na, Florence, I'm no a person that cares aboot a fuss being made for the sake o' gratitude—thank me wi' deeds. Remember I have said—a' depends on yer conduct the morn."

When they entered the house, poor Janet was weeping, because of her mother's absence, for she had expected her for two days; and her apprehensions were not removed when she saw her in the company of Florence, who, although her destined husband, and who, though he had long been in the habit of visiting her daily, had called but once during her mother's absence, and then he was sad and spoke little. She saw that her parent had prevailed on him to undertake some desperate project, and she wept for his sake.

When he arose to depart, she rose also and accompanied him to the door.

"Florence," said she, tenderly, "you and my mother hae some secret between ye, which ye winna communicate to me."

"A' that is a secret between us," said he, "is, that she consents that the morn ye shall be my winsome bride, if ye be willing, as I'm sure ye are; and that is nae secret that I wad keep frae ye; but I didna wish to put ye aboot by mentioning it before her."

Janet blushed, and again asked—

"But there is something mair between ye than that Florence and why should ye hide it frae me?"

Dear me hinny!' said he, "I wonder that ye should be sae apprehensive. There is nae secret between yer mother an' me that isna weel-kenned to every ane in the country-side. But just ye hae patience—bide a wee—wait only till the morn; and, when I come to lead ye afore the minister, I'll tell ye a'thing then."

"An' wherefore no tell me the noo, Florence?" said she. "I am sure that there is something brewing, an' a dangerous something too. Daur ye no trust me? Ye may think me a weak an' silly creature; but, if I am not just so rash and outspoken as my mother, try me if I haena as stout a heart when there is a necessity for shewing it."

"Weel, Janet, dear," said Florence, "I winna conceal frae ye that there is something brewing—but what that something is I am not at liberty to tell. I am bound by an oath not to speak o't, and so are a hunder others, as weel as me. But the morn it will be in my power to tell ye a'. Noo, just be ye contented, and get ready for our wedding."

"And my mother kens," Janet was proceeding to say, when her mother's voice was heard, crying from the house—

"Come in, Janet—what are ye doing oot there in the cauld?—ye hae been lang enough wi' Florence the nicht—but the morn's nicht ye may speak to him as lang as ye like. Sae come in, lassie"

As the reader may suppose, Madge was not one whose commands required to be uttered twice; and, with a troubled heart, Janet bade Florence "Good-night," and returned to the cottage.

It was a little after sunrise on the following day, when a body of more than a hundred peasantry, agreeably to the command of the governor, appeared before the Castle, laden with provisions. Some of them had the stores which they had brought upon the backs of horses, but which they placed upon their own shoulders as they approached the bridge. Amongst them were fishermen from Eyemouth and Coldingham, shepherds from the hills with slaughtered sheep, millers, and the cultivators of the patches of arable ground beyond the moor. With them, also, were a few women carrying eggs, butter, cheese, and poultry; and at the head of the procession (for the narrowness of the drawbridge over the frghtful chasm, beyond which the Castle stood, caused the company to assume the form of a procession as they entered the walls) was Madge Gordon, and her intended son-in-law, Florence Wilson.

The drawbridge had been let down to them; the last of the burden-bearers had crossed it; and Madge had reached the farthest sentinel, when suddenly dropping her basket, out from beneath her grey cloak gleamed the sword of her dead husband!

"Now, lads!—now for Scotland and our Queen!" she exclaimed, and as she spoke, the sword in her hand pierced the body of the sentinel. At the same instant every man cast his burden to the ground, a hundred hidden swords were revealed, and every sentinel was overpowered.

"Forward, lads! forward!" shouted Madge.

"Forward!" cried Florence Wilson, with his sword in his hand, leading the way. They rushed into the interior of the Castle; they divided into bands. Some placed themselves before the arsenal where arms were kept, while others rushed from room to room, making prisoners of those of the garrison who yielded willingly, and shewing no quarter to those who resisted. Many sought safety in flight, some flying half-naked, aroused from morning dreams after a night's carouse, and almost all fled without weapons of defence. The effect upon the garrison was as if a thunderbolt had burst in the midst of them. Within half an hour, Fast Castle was in the hands of the peasantry, and the entire soldiery who had defended it had either fled, were slain, or made prisoners.

Besides striking the first blow, Madge had not permitted the sword of her late husband to remain idle in her hands during the conflict. And, as the conquerors gathered round Florence Wilson, to acknowledge to him that to his counsel, presence of mind, and courage, as their leader, in the midst of the confusion that prevailed, they owed their victory, and the deliverance of the east of Berwickshire from its invaders, Madge pressed forward, and, presenting him her husband's sword, said—

"Tak this, my son, and keep it—it was the sword o' a brave man, and to a brave man I gie it—and this night shall ye be my son indeed."

"Thank ye, mother——mother!" said Florence. And as he spoke a faint smile crossed his features.

But scarce had he taken the sword in his hand, ere a voice was heard, crying—

'Where is he?—where shall I find him?—does he live?—where is my mother?"

"Here, love!—here! It is my Janet!" cried Florence; but his voice seemed to fail him as he spoke.

"Come here, my bairn," cried her mother, "and in the presence o' these witnesses receive a hand that ye may be proud o'."

As part of the garrison fled through Coldingham, Janet had heard of the surprise by which the Castle had been taken, and ran towards it to gather tidings of her mother and affianced husband; for she now knew the secret which they would not reveal to her.

As she rushed forward, the crowd that surrounded Florence gave way, and, as he moved forward to meet her, it was observed that he shook or staggered as he went; but it was thought no more of; and when she fell upon his bosom, and her mother took their hands and pressed them together, the multitude burst into a shout and blessed them. He strove to speak—he muttered the word, "Janet!" but his arms fell from her neck, and he sank as lifeless on the ground.

"Florence! my Florence!—he is wounded—murdered!" cried the maiden, and she flung herself beside him on the ground.

Madge and the spectators endeavoured to raise him; but his eyes were closed; and, as he gasped, they with difficulty could understand the words he strove to utter—"Water—water!"

He had, indeed, been wounded—mortally wounded—but he spoke not of it. They raised him in their arms and carried him to an apartment in the Castle; but, ere they reached it, the spirit of Florence Wilson had fled.

Poor Janet clung to his lifeless body. She now cried—"Florence!—Florence!—we shall be married to-night!—yes!—yes!—I have everything ready!" And again she spoke bitter words to her mother, and said that she had murdered her Florence. The spectators lifted her from his body, and Madge stood as one on whom affliction, in the midst of her triumph, had fallen as a palsy, depriving her of speech and action.

"My poor bereaved bairn!" she at length exclaimed; and she took her daughter in her arms and kissed her—"ye hae indeed cause to mourn, for Florence was a noble lad!—but, oh, dinna say it was my doing, hinny!—dinna wyte yer mother!—will ye no, Janet? It is a great comfort that Florence has died like a hero."

But Janet never was herself again. She became, as their neighbours said, a poor, melancholy, maundering creature, going about talking of her Florence and the surprise of Fast Castle, and ever ending her story—"But I maun awa hame and get ready, for Florence and I are to be married the nicht."

Madge followed her, mourning, wheresoever she went, bearing with and soothing all her humours. But she had not long to bear them; for, within two years, Janet was laid by the side of Florence Wilson, in Coldingham kirkyard; and, before another winter howled over their peaceful graves, Madge lay at rest beside them.

LEAVES

FROM

THE DIARY OF AN AGED SPINSTER

THE poet of THE ELEGY *par excellence*, hath written two lines which run thus—

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

Now, I never can think of these lines but they remind me of the tender, delicate, living, breathing, and neglected flowers that bud, blossom, shed their leaves, and die, in cold unsunned obscurity—flowers that were formed to shed their fragrance around a man's heart, and to charm his eye—but which, though wandering melancholy and alone in the wilderness where they grow, he passeth by with neglect, making a companion of his loneliness. But, to drop all metaphor—where will you find a flower more interesting than a spinster of threescore and ten, of sixty, of fifty, or of forty? They have, indeed, "wasted their sweetness on the desert air." Some call them "old maids;" but it is a malicious appellation, unless it can be proved that they have refused to be wives. I would always take the part of a spinster: they are a peculiar people, far more "sinned against than sinning." Every blockhead thinks himself at liberty to crack a joke upon them; and when he says something that he conceives to be wondrous smart about Miss Such-an-one and her cat or poodle dog, he conceives himself a marvellous clever fellow; yea, even those of her own sex who are below what is called a "certain age," (what that age is, I cannot tell,) think themselves privileged to giggle at the expense of their elder sister. Now, though there may be a degree of peevishness (and it is not to be wondered at) amongst the sisterhood, yet with them you will find the most sensitive tenderness of heart, a delicacy that quivers, like the aspen leaf, at a breath, and a kindliness of soul that a mother might envy—or rather, for envy, shall I not write *imitate*? But, ah! if their history were told, what a chronicle would it exhibit of blighted affections, withered hearts, secret tears, and midnight sighs!

The first spinster of whom I have a particular remembrance, as belonging to her caste, was Diana Darling. It is now six and twenty years since Diana paid the debt of nature, up to which period, and for a few years before, she rented a room in Chirnside. It was only a year or two before her death that I became acquainted with her; and I was then very young. But I never shall forget her kindness towards me. She treated me as though I had been her own child, or rather her grandchild, for she was then very little under seventy years of age. She had always an air of gentility about her; people called her "a betterish sort o' body." And, although *Miss* and *Mistress* are becoming general appellations now, twenty or thirty years ago, upon the Borders, those titles were only applied to particular persons or on particular occasions; and whether their more frequent use now is to be attributed to the schoolmaster being abroad or the dancing-master being abroad, I cannot tell, but Diana Darling, although acknowledged to be a "betterish sort o' body," never was spoken of by any other term but "auld Diana," or "auld Die." Well do I remember her flowing chintz gown, with short sleeves, her snow-white apron, her whiter cap, and old kid gloves reaching to her elbows; and as well do I remember how she took one of the common *blue cakes* which washerwomen use, and tying it up in a piece of woollen cloth, dipped it in water, and daubed it round and round the walls of her room, to give them the appearance of being papered. I have often heard of and seen *stenciling* since; but, rude as the attempt was, I am almost persuaded that Diana was the first who put it in practice. To keep up gentility putteth people to strange shifts, and often to ridiculous ones—and to both of thes extremities she was driven. But I have hinted that she was a kind-hearted creature; and, above all, do I remember her for the fine old ballads which she sang to me. But there was one that was an especial favourite with her, and a verse of which, if I remember correctly, ran thus—

Fie, Lizzy Lindsay!
Sae lang in the mornins ye lie,
Mair fit ye was helping yer minny
To milk a' the ewes and the kye."

Diana, however, was a woman of some education; and to a relative she left a sort of history of her life, from which the following is an extract:—

"My faither died before I was eighteen, (so began Diana's narrative,) and he left five of us—that is, my mother, two sisters, a brother, and myself—five hundred pounds a-piece. My sisters were both younger than me; but, within six years after our father's death, they both got married; and my brother, who was only a year older than myself, left the house also, and took a wife, so that there was nobody but me and my mother left. Everybody thought there was something very singular in this; for it was not natural that the youngest should be taken and the auldest left; and, besides, it was acknowledged that I was the best-faured* and the best-tempered in the family; and there could be no dispute but that my siller was as good as theirs.

I must confess, however, that, when I was but a lassie o' sixteen, I had drawn up wi' one James Laidlaw—but I should score out the word *one*, and just say that I had drawn up wi' *James Laidlaw*. He was a year, or maybe three, aulder than me, and I kenned him when he was just a laddie at Mr Wh—'s school in Dunse; but I took no notice o' him then in particular, and, indeed, I never did, until one day that I was an errand down by Kimmerghame, and I met James just coming out frae the gardens. It was the summer season, and he had a posie in his hand, and a very bonny posie it was. 'Here's a fine day, Dinna, says he. 'Yes, it is,' says I.

So we said nae mair for some time; but he keepit walking by my side, and at last he said—'What do ye think o' this posie?' 'It is very bonny, James,' said I. 'I think sae,' quoth he; 'and if ye will accept it, there should naebody be mair welcome to it.' 'Ou, I thank ye,' said I, and I blushed in a way—'why should ye gie me it?' 'Never mind,' says he, 'tak it for auld acquaintance sake—we were at the school together.'

So I took the flowers, and James keepit by my side, and cracked to me a' the way to my mother's door, and I cracked to him—and I really wondered that the road between Kimmerghame and Dunse had turned sae short. It wasna half the length that it used to be, or what I thought it ought to be.

But I often saw James Laidlaw after this; and somehow or other I aye met him just as I was coming out o' the kirk, and weel do I recollect that, one Sabbath in particular, he said to me—'Diana, will ye no come out and tak a walk after ye get your dinner?' 'I dinna ken, James,' says I; 'I doubt I daurna, for our folk are very particular, and baith my faither and my mother are terribly against onything like gau'n about stravaigin on the Sundays.' 'Oh, they need never ken where ye're gaun,' says he. 'Weel, I'll try,' says I, for by this time I had a sort o' liking for James. 'Then,' said he, 'I'll be at the Penny Stane at four o' clock.' 'Very weel,' quoth I.

And, although baith my faither and mother said to me, as I was gaun out—'Where are ye gaun, lassie?'—'Oh, no very far,' said I; and, at four o'clock, I met James at the Penny Stane. I shall never forget the grip that he gied my hand when he took it in his, and said—

'Ye hae been as good as your word, Diana.

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* Best-looking, or most beautiful.

We wandered awa doun by Weaderburn dyke, till we came to the Blackadder, and then we sauntered down by the river side, till we were oposite Kelloe—and, oh, it was a pleasant afternoon. Everything round about us, aboon us, and among our feet, seemed to ken it was Sunday—everything but James and me. The laverock was singing in the blue lift—the blackbirds were whistling in the hedges—the mavis chaunted its loud sang frae the bushes on the braes—the lennerts* were singing and chirming among the whins— and the shelfa† absolutely seemed to follow ye wi' its three notes over again, in order that ye might learn them.

It was the happiest afternoon I ever spent. James grat, and I grat. I got a scolding frae my faither and my mother when I gaed hame, and they demanded to ken where I had been; but the words that James had spoken to me bore me up against their reproaches.

Weel, it was very shortly, (I daresay not six months after my faither's death,) that James called at my mother's, and as he said, to bid us *fareweel!* He took my mother's hand—I mind I saw him raise it to his lips, while the tears were on his cheeks; and he was also greatly put about to part wi' my sisters; but to me he said—

'Ye'll set me down a bit, Diana.'

He was to take the coach for Liverpool—or, at least, a coach to take him on the road to that town, the next day; and from there he was to proceed to the West Indies, to meet an uncle who was to make him his heir.

I went out wi' him, and we wandered away down by our auld walks; but, oh, he said little, and he sighed often, and his heart was sad. But mine was as sad as his, and I could say as little as him. I winna, I canna write a' the words and the vows that passed. He took the chain frae his watch, and it was o' the best gold, and he also took a pair o' Bibles frae his pocket, and he put the watch chain and the Bibles into my hand, and—'Diana,' said he, 'take these, dear—keep them for the sake o' your poor James, and, as often as ye see them, think on him.' I took them, and wi' the tears running down my cheeks—'O James,' cried I, 'this is hard!—hard!'

Twice, ay thrice, we bade each other *fareweel,'* and thrice, after he had parted frae me, he cam running back again, and, throwing his arms round my neck, cried—

'Diana! I canna leave ye!—promise me that ye will never marry onybody else!'

And thrice I promised him that I wouldna.

But he gaed awa, and my only consolation was looking at the Bibles, on one o' the white leaves o' the first volume o' which I found written, by his own hand, '*James Laidlaw and Diana Darling vowed that, if they were spared, they would become man and wife; and that neither time, distance, nor circumstances, should absolve their plighted troth. Dated, May 25th,* 17—.

These were cheering words to me; and I lived on them for years, even after my younger sisters were married, and I had ceased to hear from him. And, during that time, for his sake, I had declined offers which my friends said I was waur than foolish to reject. At least half a dozen good matches I let slip through my hands, and a' for the love o' James Laidlaw who was far awa, and the vows he had plighted to me by the side o' the Blackadder. And, although he hadna written to me for some years, I couldna think that ony man could be so wicked as to write words o' falsehood and bind them up in the volume o' everlasting truth.

But, about ten years after he had gane awa, James Laidlaw came back to our neighbourhood; but he wasna the same lad he left—for he was now a dark-complexioned man, and he had wi' him a mulatto woman and three bairns that called him *faither!* He was no longer my James!

My mother was by this time dead, and expected naething but that the knowledge o' his faithlessness would kill me too—for I had clung to hope till the last straw was broken.

I met him once during his stay in the country, and, strange to tell, it was within a hundred yards o' the very spot where I first foregathered wi' him, when he offered me the posie.

'Ha! Die!' said he, 'my old girl, are you still alive? I'm glad to see you. Is the old woman, your mother, living yet?' I was ready to faint, my heart throbbed as though it would have burst. A' the trials I had ever had were naething to this; and he continued—'Why, if I remember right, there was once something like an old flame between you and me.' 'O James! James!' said I, 'do ye remember the words ye wrote in the Bible, and the vows that ye made me by the side of the Blackadder?' 'Ha! ha!' said he, and he laughed, 'you are there, are you? I do mind something of it. But, Die, I did not think that a girl like you would have been such a fool as to remember what a boy said to her.'

I would have spoken to him again; but I remembered he was the husband of another woman—though she was a mulatto—an' I hurried away as fast as my fainting heart would permit. I had but one consolation, and that was, that, though he had married another, naebody could compare her face wi' mine.

But it was lang before I got the better o' this sair slight—ay, I may say it was ten years and mair; and I had to try to pingle and find a living upon the interest o' my five hundred pounds, wi' ony other thing that I could turn my hand to in a genteel sort o' way.

I was now getting on the wrang side o' eight and thirty; and that is an age when it isna prudent in a spinster to be throwing the pouty side o' her lip to any decent lad that hauds out his hand, and says—'Jenny, will ye tak me? Often and often, baith by day and by night, did I think o' the good bargains I had lost, for the sake o' my fause James Laidlaw; and often, when I saw some o' them that had come praying to me, pass me on a Sunday, wi' their wives wi' their hands half round their waist on the horse behint them—'O James! fause James!' I have said, 'but for trusting to you, and it would hae been me that would this day been riding behint Mr ——.'

But I had still five hundred pounds, and sic fend as I could make, to help what they brought to me. And, about this time, there was one that had the character of being a very respectable sort o' lad, one Walter Sanderson; he was a farmer, very near about my own age, and altogether a most prepossessing and intelligent young man. I first met wi' him at my youngest sister's goodman's kirn,* and, I must say, a better or a more gracefu' dancer I never saw upon a floor. He had neither the jumping o' a mountebank, nor the sliding o' a play-actor, but there was an ease in his carriage which I never saw equalled. I was particularly struck wi' him, and especially his dancing; and it so happened that he was no less struck wi' me. I thought he looked even better than James Laidlaw used to do—but at times I had doubts about it. However, he had stopped all the night at my brother-in-law's as weel as mysel; and when I got up to gang hame the next day, he said he would bear me company. I thanked him, and said I was obliged to him, never thinking that he would attempt such a thing. But, just as the powny was brought out for me to ride on, (and the callant was to come up to Dunse for it at night,) Mr Walter Sanderson mounted his horse, and says he—

'Now, wi' your permission, Miss Darling, I will see you hame.'

It would hae been very rude o' me to hae said—'No, I thank you, Sir,' and especially at my time o' life, wi' twa younger sisters married that had families; so I blushed, as

* Linnets. † Chaffinch.

* Harvest Home.

it were, and gien my powny a twitch, he sprang on to his saddle, and came trotting along by my side. He was very agreeable company; and, when he said, 'I shall be most happy to pay you a visit, Miss Darling,' I didna think o' what I had said, until after that I had answered him, 'I shall be very happy to see ye, sir.' And when I thought o' it, my very cheek bones burned wi' shame.

But, howsoever, Mr Sanderson was not long in calling again—and often he did call, and my sisters and their guidmen began to jeer me about him. Weel, he called and called, for I daresay as good as three quarters of a year; and he was sae backward and modest a' the time that I thought him a very remarkable man; indeed, I began to think him every way superior to James Laidlaw.

But at last he made proposals—I consented—the wedding-day was set, and we had been cried in the kirk. It was the fair day, just two days before we were to be married, and he came into the house, and, after he had been seated a while, and cracked in his usual kind way—

'Oh,' says he, 'what a bargain I hae missed the day! There are four lots o' cattle in the market, and I might hae cleared four hundred pounds, cent. per cent., by them.'

'Losh me! Walter, then,' says I, 'why didna ye do it? How did ye let sic a bargain slip through your fingers?'

'Woman,' said he, 'I dinna ken; but a man that is to be married within eight and forty hours is excusable. I came to the Fair without any thought o' either buying or selling—but just to see you, Diana—and I kenned there wasna meikle siller necessary for that.'

'Losh, Walter, man,' said I, but that is a pity—and ye say ye could mak cent. per cent. by the beasts?'

'Deed could I,' quoth he—'I am sure o' that.'

'Then, Walter,' says I, 'what is mine the day is to be yours the morn, I may say; and it would be a pity to lose sic a bargain.'

Therefore I put into his hands an order on a branch bank that had been established in Dunse, for every farthing that I was worth in the world, and Walter kissed me, and went out to get the money frae the Bank, and buy the cattle.

But he hadna been out an hour, when ane o' my brothers-in-law called, and I thought he looked unco dowie. So I began to tell him about the excellent bargain that Walter had made, and what I had done. But the man started frae his seat as if he were crazed, and, without asking me ony questions, he only cried—'Gracious! Diana! hae ye been sic an idiot?' and, rushing out o' the house, ran to the bank.

He left me in a state that I canna describe; I neither kenned what to do nor what to think. But within half an hour he returned, and he cried out as he entered—'Diana, ye are ruined! He has taken in you and everybody else. The villain broke yesterday. He is off! Ye may bid fareweel to your siller!' 'Wha is off?' cried I, and I was in sic a state I was hardly able to speak. 'Walter Sanderson!' answered my brother-in-law.

I believe I went into hysterics; for the first thing I mind o' after his saying so, was a dozen people standing round about me—some slapping at the palms o' my hands, and others laving water on my breast and temples, until they had me as wet as if they had douked me in Pollock's Well.

I canna tell how I stood up against this clap o' misery. It was near getting the better o' me. For a time I really hated the very name and the sight o' man, and I said, as the song says, that

Men are a' deceivers.'

But this was not the worst o' it—I had lost my all, and I was now forced into the acquaintanceship of poverty and dependence. I first went to live under the roof o' my youngest sister, who had always been my favourite; but, before six months went round, I found that she began to treat me just as though I had been a servant, ordering me to do this and do the other; and sometimes my dinner was sent ben to me into the kitchen; and the servant lassies, seeing how their mistress treated me, considered that they should be justified in doing the same—and they did the same. Many a weary time have I lain down upon my bed and wished never to rise again, for my spirit was weary o' this world. But I put up wi' insult after insult, until flesh and blood could endure it no longer. Then did I go to my other sister, and she hardly opened her mouth to me as I entered her house. I saw that I might gang where I liked—I wasna welcome there. Before I had been a week under her roof, I found that the herd's dog led a lady's life to mine. I was forced to leave her too.

And, as a sort o' last alternative, just to keep me in existence, I began a bit shop in a neighbouring town, and took in sewing and washing; and, after I had tried them awhile, and found that they would hardly do, I commenced a bit school at the advice of the minister's wife, and learned bairns their letters and the catechism, and knitting and sewing. I also taught them (for they were a' girls) how to work their samplers, and to write, and to cast accounts. But what vexed and humbled me more than all I had suffered, was, that one night, just after I had let my scholars away, an auld hedger and ditcher body, almost sixty years o' age, came into the house, and 'How's a' wi' ye the nicht?' says he, though I had never spoken to the man before. But he took off his bonnet, and, pulling in a chair, drew a seat to the fire. I was thunderstruck! But I was yet mair astonished and ashamed, when the auld body, sleeking down his hair and his chin, had the assurance to make love to me!

'There is the door, sir!' cried I. And when he didna seem willing to understand me, I gripped him by the shouthers, and shewed him what I meant.

Yet quite composedly he turned round to me and said, 'I dinna see what is the use o' the like o' this—it is true I am aulder than you, but you are at a time o' life now that ye canna expect ony young man to look at ye. Therefore, ye had better think twice before ye turn me to the door. Ye will find it just as easy a life being the wife o' a hedger as keeping a school—rather mair sae I apprehend, and mair profitable too.' I had nae patience wi' the man. I thought my sisters had insulted me; but this offer o' the hedger's wounded me mair than a' that they had done.

'O James Laidlaw!' cried I, when I was left to myse., 'what hae ye brought me to! My sisters dinna look after me. My parting wi' them has gien them an excuse to forget that I exist. My brother is far frae me, and he is ruled by a wife; and I hae been robbed by another o' the little that I had. I am like a withered tree in a wilderness, standing by its lane—I will fa' and naebody will miss me. I am sick, and there are none to haud my head. My throat is parched and my lips dry, and there are none to bring me a cup o' water. There is nae *living thing* that I can ca' mine. And some day I shall be found a stiffened corpse in my bed, with no one near me to close my eyes in death or perform the last office of humanity! For I am alone—I am by myself—I am forgotten in the world; and my latter years, if I have a long life, will be a burden to strangers.'"

But Diana Darling did not so die. Her gentleness, her kindness, caused her to be beloved by many who knew not her history; and, when the last stern messenger came to call her hence, many watched with tears around her bed of death, and many more in sorrow followed her to the grave. So ran the few leaves in the diary of a spinster—and the reader will forgiveyour interpolations.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE ADVENTURES OF LAUNCELOT ERRINGTON AND HIS NEPHEW MARK.

A TALE OF LINDISFERNE.

EVERY person in Islandshire has heard of the adventures of bold Launcelot Errington and his nephew Mark. They were both seamen. Launcelot was skipper and owner of a small coasting brig, and his nephew was his mate. They were related to the Erringtons of Beaufront, an ancient Northumbrian family, remarkable for its devotion to the house of Stuart. It was in the October of 1715 that Launcelot ran his brig into Holy Island roads, and cast anchor about midway between the castle and the abbey. Every person on the island knew Launcelot; for he often paid it a visit, and especially on returning from a trip across the "herring-pond;" on which occasions he never failed to lighten the hearts of the fishermen, by dealing out to them a cargo of "the real genuine moonlight," or, in less classic phrase, brandy and Geneva. But, in the particular instance referred to, his vessel was light, and apparently had only ballast on board to keep her in sailing trim. The islanders were therefore disappointed, and they wondered what had brought him into their harbour then, there being no wind or appearance of weather that need cause him to seek shelter; and he being a bold, active fellow, and owner of his own vessel withal, it was impossible that he could have put in (as the manner of some is) merely to skulk for a day or two. But the object of Launcelot's putting into the island will appear.

"Boy!" cried he, to an urchin who resembled a water-imp, and who was mopping the deck near the top of the cabin stairs, "go to the forecastle, and tell my nevy, Mark, that I want him; and don't you be after coming back mopping there, unless I send for you. You hear that?"

"Ay, ay, Sir," replied the boy.

In less than a minute, Mark Errington, a tall, powerful, and fine looking young seaman, entered the cabin.

"Sit down, Mark, my lad," said his uncle—and Mark sat down. "I say, nevy," added Launcelot, "I'll bet you're wondering what has caused me to run the brig in here, when you expected I was to go right across to Hamburgh."

"Why, I do think it a little strange, uncle," said the nephew; "but you know it is your business and not mine. The ship is your own, and you can do as you like, I suppose."

"Well said, Mark, my boy," replied Launcelot; "you speak like a fellow that has some sense aboard; and I tell you what, if you go on as you have done, the brig shall be yours one o' these days."

"Don't talk of that, uncle," said the youth; "I am very well as I am, and wouldn't think myself better by you hurting yourself."

"Hurting myself!" repeated Launcelot; "d'ye think I couldn't live as well as I do now, though the brig were at Davy Jones to-morrow? Don't you suppose but that I can leave her to you when I like, and something worth more than her when I die, too. I have no family of my own, and you are my brother's son, Mark; and I say, my lad, that while you are his son you are my heir. So make yourself useful, my hearty;—draw a cork, and let us have a peep at the old island through 'moonlight.'" And Mark drew the cork of a bottle of brandy which stood upon the table.

Launcelot filled the glasses, and added, "I say, Mark, let us drink *the King*."

"With all my heart, Sir," said the other; "only, before I do so, I should like to know what king you mean, uncle. Is it he that came here from Hanover last year when the queen died, or he that is across the water, and that should be king?"

"Smash it, Mark!" said the skipper, "I didn't think thou was the lad that would ha' needed to ha' asked such a question. Why, isn't your name Errington? Aren't you my brother's son? And you pretend to ask me what king I mean? Why, then, I mean *our* King!—King James! and here's luck to him in a bumper."

"So be it," responded Mark; and, after drinking off his glass, he added—"but, uncle, the House of Commons and the Lords, and the army too, I believe, are, almost to a man, on the side of the Elector of Hanover; and I should like to know if you think there is any likelihood of the King returning to this country—if there would be any chance for him if he should return—or if his cause is really kept alive?"

"Why, Mark, man," returned Launcelot, "is that all thou knows about it? Listen, lad, and I will tell thee something, if thou art a true Errington. You know that I was ashore, when we were at Shields last week, for four or five days?"

"I must know that," replied the nephew, "for you left the brig under my charge: but I didn't know where you were, or what you were doing; and, as I say, it was no business of mine to ask."

"Right again, my lad," continued Launcelot; "thou shalt have the ship, for thou dost deserve her. But I will tell thee what I was doing on shore. I was on the King's service—I was seeing what I could do for him. Ye ask me if the cause be kept alive! Why, man, does the wind blow when ye take in a reef? You know Mr Foster, the member for the county, don't you?"

"I do—perfectly well," replied Mark.

"Then, if you do," added Launcelot, "you know a chip of the right block. He is a Trojan every inch of him—a king's man to the backbone. The King will never stand in need of a friend while such a man as Foster is alive. But, as I was telling you of being ashore last week, I went across the country, as far as Corbridge; and, at the house of our relation, Thomas Errington of Beaufront, I met Mr Foster, no longer member for Northumberland in the Elector's parliament, but General of his Majesty's forces south of the Tweed."

"I can't say I understand you well," interrupted Mark; "what forces do you mean?"

"Why, hark ye, lad," said Launcelot—"the spirit that used to stir up our fathers in the days of old, is alive again in Northumberland, and our friends have mounted the saddle and drawn the sword for the king. At Beaufront, I did not only meet General Foster, (for such, as I told you, he now is,) but I also met that excellent young nobleman, the Earl of Derwentwater, his brother Charles Ratcliffe, and Captain Shaftoe; with Mr Swinbourn of Capheaton, all the Charletons of Reedsmouth, Philip Hodgson of Sandow, the Sandersons of Hely, Shaftoe of Bavington, and his son Jobly of Benwell, with twenty others, and all their followers, mounted, armed, and ready for the field! The sight warmed my heart, Mark. It made me feel twenty years younger than I am. Our relation is one of the chief commanders under General Foster; and when I saw so many noble fel-

lows round me, all ready to lay down their lives in the good and true cause, my blood took fire, and I went forward to the General, and, stretching out my hand—'I beg your pardon, Mr. Foster," said I, 'but you were good enough to say that I was of some service to you, by my vote and otherwise, at the last election, and I should only like to know if I cannot be useful now; my heart is as warm as any man's in the cause, and my arm is none of the weakest.' 'Ah! my old friend, Launcelot,' said he, 'I am glad to find you here. We just want such spirits as you—you can be of much service to us.' 'Why, I don't know, your honour,' said I, 'that I am very like a spirit; I should rather think that I am a piece of as good and as heavy flesh and blood as the most of folk. But, however, only tell me how I can be of service to the cause, and, by St. George! General, the thing is done!' And so, Mark"——

"Well, what then?" asked the nephew.

"What then!" continued Launcelot—"why, he told me how I could be of service to him, to be sure. But come, lad, I think we wouldn't be the worse of another drop of the 'moonlight,' just to brighten both eyes; so, pour out another, and let us drink—'Luck to the Earl of Mar, and the right cause.'"

"With all my heart," said Mark; and they drank success to the Earl of Mar.

'I say, nevy," resumed Launcelot, after a pause, "what do you think of the castle on the island here—do you think you and I could take it?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Mark, "that is a good joke!—the first shot from their batteries would send the little brig out of the water; and, I suppose, the garrison won't consist of less than twenty men."

"And what of all that?" replied Launcelot, gravely; "I ask you, if you think we could take it? Why, lad, I find thy intellects need to be rubbed up—take another glass. Although I don't give a snap of my fingers for the score of foggies who keep the castle, you don't take me to be such a flat-fish as to think of forcing it from them by assault? No, man, I shall undermine them."

"Ha! ha! ha!—worse and worse!" said Mark; "undermine them, uncle! why, the castle is built upon a rock, which you and I might pick at for seven years, (if they would let us,) before we were able to blow them up."

"Well, Mark," said the uncle, "I find it is of no use talking to you. You are a fearless fellow; but you are as thick about the upper works as a millstone. If you saw a way by which the castle might be taken, and the flag of the Stuarts hoisted on it instead of the Hanoverian rag, would you help me to do it? I say, would you help me, Mark? If you wouldn't, you don't deserve——thou art no Errington."

"Would I help thee!" replied the other—"why, to be sure I would, and die by your side, too, if it were necessary."

"Give me thy hand, my lad," said Launcelot; "that is just what I want—and, to-morrow, when you hear me say '*St George!*' do as you see me do. In the meantime, send one of the men ashore, and tell him to go across the Low to Goswick, for a couple of salmon; or, if he can't get them there, let him go to Berwick for them. You will find, my boy, that a salmon-fin may undermine a garrison as effectually as gunpowder."

"Ho! ho!" added Mark, "I begin to see something now."

"Never mind what you see," replied his uncle; "send a man ashore."

On the following day, Launcelot went upon the island; and, strolling carelessly along towards the castle, with his pipe in his teeth, he met the sergeant who had the command of the garrison. 'Well, sergeant," said the skipper, "what news have you this morning?"

"Why, ha'nt you heard them, master?" replied the other; "I hear as how the whole mainland is in arms, and some say the Pretender has arrived in Scotland"

"Ay, ay, returned Launcelot, laughing; "that story may do to frighten old women, but it won't go down with men. I say, friend, the people on shore are not quite such fools as that would prove them to be; neither do I believe that the Pretender is so much of an ass as to venture his head in this country again."

"Well, well, you may laugh, master," rejoined the sergeant; "but I know it is no laughing matter. Our commanding officer mentions it in the instructions which he sent me from Berwick this morning."

"Why, are the people mad?" said Launcelot; "do they intend to plunge the country in civil war for the sake of any man? Hang the whole race of fools, say I;" and as he spoke, he dashed his pipe upon the ground and broke it to pieces.

"Well done, master," added the sergeant; "I am glad to find your principles are of the right sort; so come along to my room in the castle, and we will drink the health of his Majesty King George, and confusion to his enemies, in a tankard of nut-brown ale."

"Whew! whew!" whistled the skipper; "no, my hearty, when I drink his health it is in brandy—brandy redder than the rising sun; none of your slops for me. But, as I believe you to be an honest fellow, come aboard of my brig, now lying alongside here; bring all your men with you that aren't upon duty—there is room enough in the cabin for all—and you shall have a drop of the real blood-warmer, pure as imported; and I'm blowed but you've too honest a face not to wink at how it was imported. By the way, I have also got two beautiful salmon on board, and we shall demolish them amongst us as a relish to the brandy. So tip your men the boatswain's whistle, and I'll call a boat ashore."

The rarity of brandy and salmon was too much for the sergeant's stomach; and, though he at first said there was no necessity for taking his men with him—"Oh, the more the merrier—that is always my way," said Launcelot; and, within ten minutes, the sergeant and every soldier belonging to the garrison, with the exception of a corporal, two privates, and an old gunner, were on board the little brig.

Launcelot did the honours of the table, and his nephew, Mark, acted as croupier. The salmon quickly disappeared, and the brandy went merrily round. The skipper, to use his own phrase, was a "seasoned cask;" and, after pouring the contents of a bottle down his throat, he could draw another cork, and say he would "wet both eyes." Mark was more abstemious; though, being used to the liquor, it required no small quantity to produce a visible effect upon him. But it was too potent for the soldiers. Launcelot plied them with the "dry stuff, neat as imported." The brig, too, began to heave a little; for an easterly breeze had sprung up, and she began to toss up and down, bow and stern, and caused divers of the soldiers to shake on and from their seats. But the skipper cried—"Never mind, my hearties!—up again!—there is nothing like a drop of the real stuff for sea-sickness."

The sergeant had just finished his ninth glass, and returned it to the table with the flourish of a hero, hiccuping, and stretching out his arm to the skipper to shake hands with him, when the brig giving a sudden plunge, down went the man of war, with his face upon the cabin floor, and three of his companions fell upon him. They strove to rise, but it was vain. They had become drunk, dead drunk, as in a moment, and they groaned in sickness—deadly sickness. Their companions laughed at their disaster, and commenced in full chorus to sing a bacchanalian song. Launcelot joined in the chorus, and cried—"Fill again, my boys!—fill again!—never mind the sergeant—he'll soon come round, no fear of him."

Another glass, and the vociferating of the song, produced the desired effect. Every soldier's head reeled—they began to see double.

"St George!" exclaimed Launcelot, "but I must on shore; I have something to do." And, as he ascended the cabin stairs, Mark rose and followed him.

"Hollo, master!—where are you going, eh?" cried the soldiers; "you are not going to leave us in this way?"

"No, no, my brave fellows," cried the skipper; "draw another cork, and make yourselves at home; I'll be with you presently."

"Ay, ay," rejoined they; "we'll do that, and quickly too—good luck to ye, master."

"Now, Mark, my lad," said the skipper, "just keep by me, and you shall see a bit of sport." And going to the head of the vessel, he called to him a seaman, and said—"Bob, take a handspike, and go aft to the companion, and the first of those lobsters in the cabin that offers to crawl upon deck, give him a tip over the sconce with it, and send him, heels up, down again."

"Very well, Sir," said the seaman unconcernedly, stooping, and lifting up a handspike as he spoke; "I'll do that."

"Skull us ashore, boy," said Launcelot, to the urchin of whom we have already spoken, as resembling a water-imp; and leaping into the boat, while his nephew followed him—"Now, Mark, my lad," continued he, "now for a touch at glory!" They were landed within a hundred yards of the castle, and immediately proceeded towards it. The sentinel at the gate, knowing them as the boon companions of his fellow-soldiers, suffered them to approach him.

"Well, my fine fellow," said Launcelot, addressing him, "I must say it is too bad to keep you fixed up here like a pillar, or lark in a cage, while your comrades are all as merry as old Bacchus, on board of my little brig. But I didn't forget you, and have brought a drop of the creature to comfort your heart."

The sentinel was about to thank him, when Launcelot, instead of producing the bottle, suddenly grasped him by the throat, dashed him on the ground, and wrested his musket from his hands, crying, as he did so, "Now, Mark, into the castle, and down with the corporal!"

The soldier was as a child in the iron grasp of Launcelot Errington, who, pulling a quantity of rope-yarn from his breast, tied his prisoner hand and foot, and left him on the ground. His nephew, in the meantime, had hurried into the castle, where, meeting the corporal, he as easily overcame him, as his uncle had disarmed the sentinel. There remained but another soldier and the old gunner to conquer. Seizing the arms of his hand-and-foot-bound prisoner, Launcelot hastened to the eastern side of the castle, where the other soldier stood guard, and approaching, unobserved, within a few yards of him, and presenting the musket, cried, "Yield!—down with your arms!"

The soldier refused to comply with his command, and was levelling his musket towards the besieger, when Launcelot, to use his own phrase, "sent a bit of lead through the shoulder of his left wing," and the soldier and his musket fell on the battlement together.

Mark, in the meantime, having secured the corporal, seized the old gunner (who had ventured out of the armoury on hearing the cries of the corporal for assistance) by the breast, and held him until he should receive the commands of his uncle concerning him.

"Tie the old chap's wrists, but not his feet, Mark," cried Launcelot, on beholding his nephew with his foot on the body of the corporal, and his hand on the breast of the gunner; "only tie his hands to prevent his doing mischief; I have a use for his feet."

Mark pinioned the veteran accordingly; and Launcelot, dragging the two soldiers and the corporal into separate apartments, locked them up; and returning again to his nephew and the gunner, he clenched his fist in the face of the latter, and said, "Now, my old man, without a word of a murmur, you shew me where to find the keys of the gates;" and the gunner did so

Launcelot took the keys, and he and his nephew, shutting the gates, locked themselves within the walls of the castle, constituting themselves its governors and garrison. Again, addressing the gunner, the skipper added, "Now, old one, I have just another piece of service for you to perform, and then I shall lock you up as I have done your comrades. Lead us to where we shall get the keys of the magazine and the arsenal, and then conduct us to them."

But the old man having perceived a body of fishermen proceeding across the field that lay between the castle and the town, and judging that the alarm would soon be given to the sergeant and his men, he took courage, and ventured to grumble between his teeth, "No, confound me if I do!"

"Oh, thou won't shew me to them, old lad?" said Launcelot; "you wont, eh?—Well, take hold of his feet, Mark; I have a short way of dealing with all stubborn rebels."

Mark seized the old gunner by the feet, while his uncle pulled back his shoulders; and lifting him from the ground they carried him to the highest point of the battlements, and immediately over the perpendicular cliff that rose from the beach.

"Once!—twice!—thrice!" cried Launcelot, while he and his nephew swung the gunner in the air, suspending him over the piled battlement and cliff. Launcelot paused; and, addressing his victim, sternly said, "Do you consent to shew us all, now? Refuse again, and I will hurl you headlong over the precipice, to be a morning meal to the sea-birds from the Fern isles!" The veteran was no coward, but his heart failed as he felt himself tossed in the air, with death yawning beneath him.

"I will shew you—shew you everything," he gasped.

He took them to where the arms and the powder were kept, and Launcelot and his nephew, having loaded the few cannon upon the ramparts, loaded also every musket that they could find in the castle, and placed them on the turrets, ready for defence.

Above a hundred inhabitants of the island—men, women, and children—now stood before the gate of the castle, marvelling at the doings of bold skipper Errington, and his nephew Mark. But he kept them not long in suspense as to his intentions; for, pulling down the union flag of the united kingdom from the pole upon the ramparts, he hoisted in its stead the symbol of the house of Stuart; and, taking off his hat, waved it towards the people, and cried, at the utmost pitch of his stentorian voice, "I hereby proclaim our only lawful sovereign, James, the Third of England and Ninth of Scotland, King of these realms; and let all good men and true come now and enrol themselves under his standard! God save the King! say I; and let every traitor be choked that won't say the same."

Then Launcelot and his nephew fired two pieces of cannon, and gave three cheers for King James; but the spectators responded not to their shout.

Some said, "Why, the old skipper and his mate are drunk, and it is only a frolic; but they are carrying the joke too far." Others said they were mad.

But Mark said to him, "Well, uncle, we have got the castle into our own keeping, and what are we to do with it, now that we have got it? We shall have a whole regiment of soldiers against us from Berwick to-morrow, I have no doubt, and you and I can't defend it."

"Look ye, Mark," said Launcelot, "don't be shewing the white feather, or I will swear again you are no Errington, no brother's son of mine, or a drop's blood to me, and the brig may sink where she lies at anchor for all that I care. But now, I say, Mark—I am saying, don't you be thinking but that I know what I have been about all this time. Why, man, the two guns that I fired just now, were a signal to three French privateers, that I have no doubt are lying snugly enough behind the Ferns, out of sight, but within hearing. We shall have them here to-night; and, if you keep your eye across the Low, upon Beal bushes in the morning, you will see a troop of General Foster's

men coming to our assistance. Then, my lad, I shall be governor of the castle, and you shall be my lieutenant, and owner of the brig into the bargain."

"Well," said Mark, "it doesn't matter much. I can't say I have any fancy to be mewed up in a stand-still, stone-and-lime castle, with always the same thing before your eyes; but I take it that I can stand fire as well as any man, and will stand it too, as you shall see, if it comes to that;—only, as we had put in here, I had made up my mind for a different sort of amusement to-night."

"And what sort of amusement might that be?—To go a-sweethearting, eh?"

"Why, I daresay, it was there and thereabouts. I intended to have gone along as far as Bamborough, to have seen an old acquaintance."

"Ho! ho! Sally Beadnell," interrupted the uncle; "you must defer that to another day, Mark. At present, my lad, as the saying goes, you have other fish to fry."

"I see that," said Mark; "and I suppose, if we have thrust our heads into a trap, we must defend them as we best can. However, happen what may, I'll stand by you while I have a foot to stand upon."

"Give me your hand again, nevy," cried Launcelot; "you're a famous fellow!—Mark, I'm proud of you!"

Now, in the course of the night, the sergeant awoke from the sleep in which his drunkenness had sealed up his senses, and gathering himself up upon the cabin floor, wondering where he was, and positive that north had become south, and south north, while the motion of the vessel rendered his "confusion worse confounded," and he stumbled now over one of his companions in dissipation, and again over another, until shouting at the utmost pitch of his voice—"Hollo! where am I? I am Sergeant Chadwell, commander-in-chief of Holy Island Castle! Hollo! where am I?" And his shouting aroused them from their death-like slumbers. Rising on their hands and knees, sick and shivering, one by one, they began to be conscious of their situation; and one of them ventured to ascend the cabin stairs. But no sooner had he raised his head upon a level with the deck, than the seaman, faithful to the injunctions of his commander, made the handspike descend upon it with sufficient force to cause the soldier to go reeling backwards and downwards amongst his comrades. Another attempted to lead the way, and met with the same fate. "Fire and thunder!" shouted the valorous sergeant,—"what is the meaning of this? We are in France, or the Highlands, and in the hands of the Pretender and his cannibal Scotchmen, I'll be sworn for it."

He drew his sword, and flourished it at the foot of the cabin stairs; and terror causing his followers to forget their shivering, thirst, and sickness, they unsheathed their bayonets, and threatened, loud and deeply, destruction to all who should oppose them. Their wild and desperate noise attracted the attention of the crews of several boats that had been out at the herring-fishing; and they pulling alongside of the brig, in a few minutes the sergeant and his company were released from their captivity; and, on being brought ashore to the island, made conscious of all that had taken place during their nap in the lap of oblivion.

The men looked stupid and silly, and now the sergeant raved, that, like a Roman, he would turn his sword upon his own breast, for he could not live deprived of his honour; and again he threatened to storm the castle, sword in hand; which threat, while the fumes of the brandy still reeked in his brain, he, in some measure, carried into effect; for, marshalling out his fifteen rank and file in front of the abbey—he with his sword in his hand, and they with their bayonets—he marched them in front of the castle-gate, over which they found Mark Errington standing sentinel, with a firelock over his shoulder. The sergeant commanded him to surrender. Mark was prone to laugh; and he now laughed aloud, and inquired, "Who brought them ashore?" In vain the sergeant demanded that he should come down and open the gates, and in vain he brandished his sword, and his company their bayonets; for Mark laughed the more. Finding their threats and the flourishing of their weapons of no effect, they began to gather stones, and hurled at his head a volley of missiles. Mark crouched for a moment behind the battlement, and springing up so soon as the shower of stones had fallen beyond him, levelled his firelock, and, touching the trigger, carried away a portion of the right cheek and ear of the sergeant commanding in chief. He raised his hand to his head, and, as he shouted—"I'm shot!—I'm dead!"—his followers turned upon their heels, and "fled for safety and for succour;" and, as he shouted, and they ran, again Mark's loud laugh was heard half over the island. Throughout the night, Launcelot made such signals as had been agreed on; but the day dawned, and neither the French privateers, nor the troop that General Foster was to send, arrived to his assistance.

The firing of the two pieces of cannon on the previous day had attracted the attention of the inhabitants of Berwick; and the commander of the garrison, proceeding with glass in hand to the look-out upon the ramparts, to his consternation beheld the standard of the house of Stuart waving in the wind from Holy Island Castle. The garrison in that fortress was but a part of, or a dependency on his, and he, as well as the sergeant, felt his honour implicated in the transaction. In a few minutes the news spread from street to street, that the rebels were in possession of Holy Island; and great was the excitement that prevailed. Early, therefore, in the morning, three companies of infantry, preceded by as many pieces of artillery, proceeded along the bridge and over Tweedmouth Moor, until, arriving at Beal Bushes, they directed their march upon the island.

Mark, being told by his uncle to keep his eyes in the morning fixed upon Beal Bushes, was the first to perceive them; and, calling to his uncle, he said—"Well, yonder is a goodly company of red-coats coming towards the island; but I don't think, uncle, they are the gentlemen that Mr Foster was to send to our assistance." Mark spoke this in a tone of what may be called subdued irony.

"No, splice me if they are, nevy!" answered Launcelot; "I'd bet a stiver they are the Elector's lobsters from Berwick. But never mind, my boy; I am governor here in the name of the king, and they shan't compel me to give up the keys while there is a shot left in the lockers of the castle."

As the tide began to ebb, what a short time before had been a sea of two or three miles in width, separating the island from the mainland, became a dry sand, with only the streamlet Lindis winding through it, and leaving a footway communication from Beal to the island.

The soldiers now began their march across the Low, and, about noon, drew up in hostile array before the castle. The first act of their commanding officer, on learning the actual situation of affairs, was to cause the sergeant and his outwitted company to be placed under arrest. He then, with his brother officers and about fifty men, marched forward to the foot of the rock on which the small but formidable castle stands, and summoned its occupants to surrender at discretion.

"You, Sir, may surrender, if you please," answered bold Launcelot; "but I can tell thee, thou wilt find no such word in any dictionary in Holy Island Castle—therefore, I don't know what you mean. Do thou thy best, and I'll do mine Make ready, Mark, my lad," he added; "we may hold out until the General or some of them come to our assistance, and when they hear the sound of our being at warm work it will hasten them."

The three pieces of artillery were pointed against the gate of the castle, and the soldiers poured a shower of

musketry wherever the heads of Launcelot of his nephew were for a moment visible. The two kinsmen, however, maintained a long, a desperate, and an active resistance. Some lay dead around the foot of the rock, and many were borne wounded to the town. The fishermen, who stood at a distance, spectators of the siege, while they professed to be enemies of the Pope and the Pretender, (whom some of them considered one and the same person—or, at least, father and son,) wished success to bold Launcelot and his nephew, and loudly expressed their admiration of their coolness and courage, and the noble stand which they made. But the gate of the castle was at length forced, and the soldiers rushed in.

"Well, Mark, my boy," said Launcelot, "since it is to be, I suppose it must be. Brave men have had to use their heels as well as their hands before to-day. Follow me."

Escaping through a small window in the castle, they clung to the sides of the almost precipitous rocks, and after a most perilous descent, succeeded in reaching the beach. They attempted to conceal themselves among the sea-weed; but being discovered, were compelled to continue their flight towards the mainland. The sea had again set in, and communication with the opposite coast was cut off; and when Launcelot saw this, he said—"The sea is in, but never mind, Mark, it is so much the better, we won't drown; we can swim for it, and they daren't follow us."

They had reached within a hundred yards of the point where they proposed to plunge into the sea and swim for the mainland, when a shot from one of a party of soldiers, who closely pursued them, pierced Launcelot through the thigh, shattering the bone, and he fell, unable to rise again, upon the sand. "Run, Mark! run, my lad!" he cried—"never mind me." But Mark turned, and raising his uncle upon his shoulders, ran with him to the sea and plunged in. He, however, had not reached beyond his own depth, when a dozen soldiers, rushing into the water after him, surrounded, and pointing their muskets at his head, brought him with his burden to the shore. "Keep a good heart, Mark," said the wounded uncle, on finding that they were prisoners—"you know the saying—'They who are born to be drowned will never be hanged;' and I should like to know who were born to be drowned if you and I were not. Fear nothing, Mark—I say, fear nothing. When the King arrives, if he be a man at all, he won't be forgetting Mark and Launce Errington, and this day's work. I say, you swabs," added he, addressing the soldiers, "if you will have me for a prisoner, you must carry me, for I can't set a timber to the ground." And he muttered something about the cowardliness of shooting a man behind his back.

The uncle and nephew were fettered, and conveyed in a cart to Berwick jail, where, notwithstanding his confinement, Launcelot's wound healed rapidly, and his limb acquired strength. Their trial was to come on at the ensuing sessions; and as death, at least, was their certain doom, their fate created a wondrous sensation in the town. Burgess and stallenger spoke of nothing else; and some even did not think the town safe with two such terrible rebels imprisoned in it. However, I am persuaded that they had friends in Berwick, though their names are not recorded. Be this as it may, the skipper and his nephew looked forward to their fate, not only with perfect indifference, but they sang from morning until night—"no lark so blithe as they." They astonished the jailor, and, being catholics, they would have nothing to say to the chaplain.

Berwick prison-house stood then, as it does now, (though the present is not the same building,) a huge nuisance in the midst of the street called Marygate; and then, as now, debtors and felons often met together within it. Now, one day, the prisoners had suspended by a cord, from their iron-grated windows, a tin can, on which was pasted a piece of paper, and on the paper was written this simple petition—"Remember the poor Prisoners." Benevolent people, in passing along the street, occasionally dropped a coin into the tin can. But one day, some waggish boy, or secret friend of the Stuart family, slipped into it a mason's chisel! Some of the prisoners, on drawing up the can, and perceiving the chisel, proposed to throw it over the window again, but Launcelot, who had never been a partaker of the alms which they received, seized it, and concealing it in his bosom, exclaimed—"You take the pence, I take the chisel." Mark smiled significantly as the latter placed the iron instrument in his breast.

Great was the consternation of the jailor, about a fortnight after this, when, on visiting his wards in the morning, according to custom, he found one after another deserted, and on entering that in which Launcelot and his nephew had been confined, the rays of the morning sun and the morning breeze met his face together. The man of keys, bolts, and bars, stood petrified, horror-stricken! A flag-stone from the pavement of the floor was removed, and there yawned an aperture sufficient to admit the body of a man, and from which, as hath been stated, issued the morning light and the morning air. There was an old oven in the cell, the door of which stood open, and the oven was filled with stones and earth! Of all who had been under his charge, the jailor found but one or two peaceable debtors left. He hastened to the street, and gave the alarm to the magistrates and the garrison, and within half an hour, constables and soldiers were sent in every direction in pursuit of the fugitives. But, leaving them to pursue their different courses, we shall follow the fortunes of Launcelot and his nephew Mark.

Launcelot made no bad use of his chisel. Having raised a flag-stone in the floor of his cell, he began to dig the earth under it, towards the street, carefully concealing the earth so dug in the oven already mentioned, and with equal care replacing the flag-stone, before the stated periods of the jailor's visits. The other prisoners, however, being aware of the fact of his being in possession of the chisel, it became necessary that they should be privy to his scheme, and partake in its consequences. When, therefore, in the dead of night, he effected an opening to the street, they escaped with him.

Launcelot and his nephew, on finding themselves once more at liberty, ran down Hide Hill, and through what is now called the Shore Gate, to the river, where they found lying an oared boat belonging to the Custom House. (The bridge being guarded, and secured also by treble gates—for there was the English gate where the soldiers stood, and two strong gates, called the Blue gates, between that and the centre arch—escape by it was impossible.) They had not pulled off a dozen yards from the shore, when two thieves, who had escaped with them, arrived at the side of the river, and begged to be taken across. Launcelot growled and pulled on; but Mark, who was fond of a jest, answered—"No, I thank you. *You don't pull in our boat*. It is every man for himself to-night and we don't exactly wish the company of thieves yet."

The sentinels at the bridge heard the sound of the voices, and the dipping of the oars in the water; but, through the darkness of the night, they could perceive nothing, and imagined that the sounds proceeded from some vessel about to sail with the morning tide. Launcelot and Mark pulled ashore at what is called the Carr Rock, and proceeding to Spittal, they called at the house of a fisherman, with whom the former, in his capacity of smuggler, had had frequent dealings. The fisherman was one who cared nothing either about Kings or Pretenders; but he gave his old friends, Launcelot and Mark, a hearty welcome; and, as it was known a vigilant search would be made after them he con-

cealed them in his stow-hole, which, he said, "All the men alive would never find out."

I should have told you, however, that Mark, on leaping out of the boat, pushed it adrift, so that no trace of where they had landed might be discovered, and within a quarter of an hour from their leaving it, it was carried out to sea.

After the jailor had spread the alarm, so diligent was the search that had been made, that within six hours every prisoner who had escaped, save Mark and his nephew, were captured and brought back to the jail. But they were the principal objects of search. The commander of the garrison offered a reward for their being secured, and a price was set upon their heads; while they remained secure in the stow-hole of the Spittal fisherman, and from night to night he brought them tidings of all that had passed. One night he entered, after they had been concealed about ten days, and the dim lamp revealed that his countenance was, beyond expression, rueful.

"Ah! Master Errington," said he, shaking his head, "I doubt you and your nevy canna bide here in safety ony langer. I was ower in the toon the day, an' I see prented bills aboot the street, and government offerin' a reward o' five hundred pounds to onybody that will discover or apprehend outher the one or the other o' ye. An' ye knaw Jem Phillips—him that ye refused to trust the brandy to last year—I knaw he hates you ever since; I saw him reading the prented bill the day, an' I hae my awn reasons for thinking that Jem knaws where ye are. Therefore, as a friend, I would advise ye baith to shift your quarters this very nicht." They deemed it prudent to take his advice, and, within half an hour, left their place of concealment; but not until, from the wardrobe of his wife, he had arrayed them as fish-women—and with their own jackets over the gowns, their heads ornamented with red and yellow handkerchiefs tied beneath their chins, and descending in a loose point down their necks, and each with a creel upon his shoulders, they bade farewell to their friend, and wandered forth upon the moor.

"Now, Mark, lad," said Launcelot, "what road dost thou think we should steer? I have a thought that General Foster will either be about Wooler or Kelso, and I think our best way will be to strike west, and try to find him. What dost thou say?"

"Why, uncle, I say that we might seek him until we were found ourselves, and that, I suppose, is what neither you nor I wish. No; if there is any one that will prove a friend to us now, and not betray us, it is Sally Beadnell; and I could trust her father, too."

Launcelot continued walking across the moor for a few minutes in silence, and, at length, replied—"Well, I believe you are right, Mark—Bamborough be it. Only you know daylight will be in, and every person astir, before we could reach Belford. Now, I propose that we strike across to Kyloe hills, and conceal ourselves all the day among the rocks, and we shall bear down on Sally Beadnell's at midnight."

"Agreed," replied Mark; and as they passed over the grounds of Scremerston, Launcelot said—"We should be able to get some tidings of the General's movements here, if we knew where to make the inquiry, for we are now on the property of the brave young Derwentwater."

"Very likely," added Mark; "but we don't know friend from foe, or who to inquire at, and I prefer pushing on to Sally Beadnell's."

So they continued their flight through Cheswick, Haggerston, and Lowlin, and, before day dawned, both sat down in a desolate place, behind a grey rock, on the Kyloe hills. When the sun arose, Launcelot raised his head over the bare rock, and from his situation he had a full view of Lindisferne and its bay; and, after gazing for a few minutes, he said, with a sort of sigh—"I say, Mark, look! the rascals have our brig away from the island; there isn't a square-rigged vessel in the roads—nothing but a Scotch sloop from Grangemouth, or thereabouts—I know by her build." Mark looked over the rock, and, half pathetically, half indignantly, exclaimed—"Jingo! so they have! The fellows could not sail without your orders—who can have taken her?" "Oh! the Elector's sharks!" said Launcelot; "but never mind, nevy—let her go, and sink with them too. If we get out of this scrape, I can still leave you something handsome that they can't touch." "Don't talk about that, uncle," said Mark; "but they shan't keep the brig when I learn who has her." Launcelot gave his nephew a slap upon the shoulder, and cried—"Well said, boy! I like you better and better, Mark."

The day passed on, and they had seen people at a distance, but none observed them. A little before midnight, they left their retreat among the hills, and began to descend towards Bamborough. Now, the father of Sally Beadnell was a farmer, and his house lay about a mile distant from Bamborough Castle, and it was drawing towards three o'clock in a winter morning, when a gentle tapping was heard at the window of the room in which Sally slept.

"Who's there?" she inquired, in a low and timid voice.

"It is me, Sally—Mark!" was the answer.

"Mark!" she responded, in a low faint tone of astonishment, and approaching the window, anxiously whispered—"Don't speak, darling!—don't stir!—lest you be heard! I will come to you in a minute! But, oh! why have you ventured here?"

"There is to be danger here, too," muttered Launcelot.

Mark shook his head, and in the same manner answered—"I doubt it."

In a few minutes, the door was gently turned upon its hinges, and a female issued from the house. Even the dim starlight of the morning revealed that she was young and beautiful. She started, when, instead of meeting her fugitive lover, she beheld two tall, uncouth-looking fishwomen, with creels upon their backs before her.

"Don't be afraid, Sally, dear," whispered Mark, approaching her—"it is me. You must save my life, love!"

She threw herself in his arms, and said—"O Mark!—dear Mark!—why have you ventured here? How can I save you? You are surrounded by the government soldiers. We are suspected of harbouring you as it is, and two of them are billeted, I think they call it, in the house. Oh! where can you go?—where can I hide you? I have heard even our servants saying, amongst themselves, that they wished they could get the five hundred pounds that are set upon your head!"

Mark was silent; and his uncle added—"This is no harbour for us, lad—we must push our boat off in another direction, though it be through the breakers. There is no help for it now. It is only dying at the worst, and we have met death in the face many a time."

Sally clung around Mark's neck and wept.

"Don't cry, dear," said he; "since it is so, and we can have no shelter here, we must just risk every danger, and try to find our way to Foster's army. Belike you can tell us, love, where it now is?"

"Alas!" replied she, and she wept more bitterly, "he has no army now. I heard the soldiers in the house telling my father how the rebels, as they called them, had all been defeated and made prisoners, and that the gallant Derwentwater was in the Tower, and squire Foster in a place they call Newgate." The uncle and the nephew exchanged looks with each other—they were looks of grief.

"Let us fight for it, Mark," said Launcelot, bitterly; "and if we can't escape from the country, we shall die in the attempt. I say, girl, it is not in your power to conceal us; but your father has arms in the house—pistols, powder,

bullets—get us them! If you love Mark—if you would give him a chance for his life—go bring them!"

Her head fell as if lifeless on her lover's arm.

"Sally! Sally dear!" said he, and he kissed her cheek as he spoke—"look up—speak to us—we cannot stay—get us the pistols—we shall meet hereafter!"

"Hereafter!" repeated the agonized girl; "no, no, you cannot go—you could not escape. They are still in search of you over the whole country." She was silent for a few moments, and again added—"I think—I think I could conceal you for a few days—perhaps until they have done searching for you in these parts. There is a pea-stack behind the house here; the straw is loose on the top of it, and the wind can't reach it. I think no one would find you there, and I could bring you food every night."

"Bless thee, my own sweet one!" said Mark. "Ay, bless her, indeed!" added Launcelot—"she is a good girl."

She conducted them to the pea-stack; and when she had seen the straw drawn over them, she stole again to the house. Each night she visited them, communicating to them, in anxious whisperings, all that she had heard during the day, and of the search that was still made after them. But, although her father was fond of Mark, she feared to communicate to him what she had done; for a traitor's death was denounced against any one who should be found guilty of harbouring or concealing the Erringtons.

On the third day after their concealment, the two soldiers who were billeted in the house came forth, and leaning against the stack, began to pull the peas from it.

"It is plaguy strange," said the one to the other, "that nothing has been heard about these fellows, the Erringtons. I thought, when we were sent here, that we stood a good chance of dividing the reward between us; for I expected, from all that I had heard, to find the young one skulking about the place."

"And I believe he is nearabouts, too," answered the other; "I could swear the girl Sally knows where he is. I observe she watches every step we take."

So saying, they returned to the house, leaving the fugitives, for whose lives they sought, and who had overheard them, with the disagreeable consciousness that the neighbourhood in which they were concealed was more than suspected. Nine days passed on, and they remained undiscovered in their painful hiding-place. But, on the tenth night, the thrasher or barn-man came into the room where Mr Beadnell and his family sat, and inquired, "What stack he should begin to thrash next?"

"The pea-stack, John," answered Mr Beadnell.

"No! oh no! it must not be thrashed to-morrow!" exclaimed his daughter hurriedly; and her looks yet more plainly bespoke her agitation.

The barn-man was a shrewd man, and he failed not to observe her confusion, and while he kept his eye fixed upon her, he began to ruminate on its cause.

"What do you mean, Sally, love?" inquired her father; "why may not the stack be thrashed to-morrow?"

"Because—because," answered she falteringly, "I wish —John to go to Alnwick for me".

"Oh, very well," replied her father—"he may go."

"Very well," repeated the barn-man; "at what hour must I be ready, Ma'am?" But there was a withering smile on his face as he spoke. He looked as a man who has found a treasure, and wishes to conceal it.

"At six," faltered the trembling girl.

When the barn-man withdrew, Mr Beadnell desired his other children to go into the kitchen, and said—"I must speak to you, Sally." She placed her hands before her eyes and sobbed aloud. "Come dear," said he, soothingly, "I am not angry with you; but you have not acted fairly with me. Sally. You know where Mark Errington is—you have him concealed." "Father! father!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands—"oh, do not betray my poor Mark!" "Me betray him! silly girl!" said he; "why would you not trust your father?—you knew that I was his friend. You have betrayed him, Sally!" "Oh! no, no!" she cried—"do not say so! how have I betrayed him?" "Is he not concealed about the pea-stack?" added he. "Yes," replied she, tremblingly, and wept the more; "he and his uncle have been concealed there these nine days." "Nine days!" said her father; "Sally, you are a strange girl. I suspected that you knew where they were; but now the old knave of a barn-man knows where they are also, and before morning he will betray them. They must leave this place this very hour, or their blood will be on our head."

The father and his daughter crept slowly to the stack where the fugitives lay. They informed them of their place of retreat being known; and the honest farmer, furnishing them with money, provisions, and the garb of countrymen, urged them to fly for their lives, and offered up a brief but earnest prayer for their protection.

The parting of Mark and Sally was abrupt but agonizing; and even his uncle let fall a tear upon her hand, as he took it to bid her farewell.

Within three hours from the time of their departure, and when the family had retired to rest, but neither the father nor his daughter to sleep, the barn-man, with a party of soldiers from the castle, arrived, and surrounding the stack, they thrust their bayonets into it, and began to level it with the ground. Disappointed in finding their expected prey, they proceeded to search the house, which Mr Beadnell said they were welcome to do; and, taking his treacherous servant by the throat, he dragged him to the door, in the presence of the soldiers, flinging his wages after him.

Concealing themselves in the moors by day, and travelling by night, on the third night after leaving Bamborough, Launcelot and his nephew arrived at Gateshead House, where they obtained shelter; and, after remaining there a few days, hearing of a vessel that was about to sail from Sunderland to France, the gentleman who was then concealing them procured them a passage in her. They arrived at Sunderland about midnight, and, before daybreak, once more breathed their ocean air upon its bosom.

After their arrival in France, Mark kept up his correspondence with Sally Beadnell, trusting to see better days, and cheering her with the hope that they would see them. In one of her letters, there was the following passage—"A neighbour of ours, the rich old man that always used to try to set my father against you, and strive to get him to marry me to him, has got your uncle's ship. She was 'fiscated, I think they call it. He got it for a mere trifle—father says for nothing at all, but for some low work that he did for the government. She was brought into North Sunderland, and I hear is to sail for some place they call Hamburgh; and if that be anyway near where you are, I think it is a pity but that you and your uncle could go there and take her—for every man has a right for his own." So wrote Sally Beadnell. Mark shewed the letter to his uncle. "Nevy," said Launcelot, after perusing it, "I always said Sally was a sensible girl. I'll buy her her wedding-dress for that letter. We will off to Hamburgh to-morrow. The brig *is* mine! No man, no king, nobody had a right to take her from me. I bought her with my own money—I have ventured my life in her. She *shall* be mine again. I say it! Let us make ready for Hamburgh, Mark."

Two days before the brig was to sail from Hamburgh for London, two strangers, apparently German merchants, wearing beards and mustachios, came on board, and in broken English bargained for their passage. The terms were agreed upon and the money paid.

It was a beautiful moonlight night, and the vessel had not proceeded twenty miles from the land. The two mer-

chants were walking the deck together. They separated; and the one suddenly dashed the man at the helm upon the deck, while the other, seizing the hatchway, placed it over the forecastle, and standing upon it, drew a pistol and presented it at the head of the seaman on watch. It was the work of a moment.

"Tie your prisoner, Mark," cried he who stood over the forecastle, "and shoot the skipper, if he peep from the cabin to shew resistance." The captain was in the habit of indulging in "potations pottle deep," and at the moment was in no condition to offer effective resistance. Before, therefore, he was aroused from his fit of stupefaction, Mark had bound the helmsman, and left him helpless on the deck: and as the skipper reeled up the cabin stairs, he shouted, as he ascended—"Hollo! hollo there!—what are you after? I hope none o' you are uncivil to the strange gentlemen, eh?"—and this was spoken with sundry well known drunken interruptions. The moment that he had raised his head above the deck, Mark burst into his wonted laugh, and grasping him by the breast, said—"Come up, old boy, and I'll shew you what we are after!"

Thus saying, he pulled him upon the deck, and laid him prostrate by the side of the helmsman. The skipper fumed, kicked, and raged most wickedly. But Mark, causing him to feel the cold muzzle of a pistol on his cheek, and threatening, at the same time, to give him its contents through his head if he struggled more, he suddenly sobered down into tranquillity, and suffered his hands and feet to be bound.

Mark now proceeded to assist his uncle, who still stood on the hatchway, over the forecastle, in which the rest of the crew clamoured lustily, demanding to know the cause of their confinement, and shouting promiscuously—"Mutiny!—Piracy!—Murder!"

"Silence, ye rascals!" vociferated Launcelot, stamping his foot upon the hatchway; "I am Launce Errington, if ever you heard of such a man—this ship is mine—I bought her and never sold her—and death to the first man who disputes my right to command her!"

"Launcelot Errington!" exclaimed the men confined in the forecastle, in a tone which bespoke that a sudden "change had come over the spirit of their dream."

"My old master!" cried the man who had been on the watch, and at whose head the pistol had, till now, been levelled—"Forgive me, Sir," added he—"I am your old cabin-boy, Bill Smith of North Shields, that sailed with you twenty years ago, and, for your kindness to me then, I am ready to go to Davy Jones with you, if you say the word."

"Bravo, Bill, my lad!—give me your hand," said Launcelot; "I remember you now," and he thrust the pistol into the breast-pocket of a greatcoat which he wore. And as the seaman shook the hands of his old master he added—"And be this your nevy, Master Mark, that took Holy Island with you, Sir—the Castle, I mean?"

"Yes," replied Launcelot, "this is my nevy, your commander that will be; for I don't intend to sail the brig myself, and neither will I part with you, Bill."

"Ah, master! you're the old man," said the seaman. "Never heard an ill word of you. You were always a-doing good to somebody." Mark shook Bill Smith by the hand, and said he "liked to meet a fellow that had gratitude aboard, and didn't forget old friends." For some minutes the crew, who were cooped up in the forecastle, were silent, listening to what was passing over their heads.

"Master," added Bill Smith, "I see Master Mark has got the skipper of the brig that was, and his mate, fast enough aft there; and I'm sure there is only one of my messmates below that wont stand by you as stiffly as I will."

The hatchway was removed, and the crew were let up one by one, each taking a vow, before he was permitted to put his foot upon the deck, that he would be true to the real owner and master of the vessel. But, as the last man made his appearance—"Ah! don't trust him," said Bill Smith; "that is him I meant—I would'nt believe him on his oath. Set him adrift with the skipper and mate."

"I'll trust to you, Bill," replied Launcelot.

The stern-boat was lowered, and in it were placed a quantity of biscuits, beef, water, and rum. The skipper and mate were hoisted over the side of the vessel into it, and after them the seaman, whom Bill Smith said was *not to be trusted*. Launcelot eagerly seized the helm of his old vessel—as eagerly as a long absent son would embrace his mother—and steering away from them, with a loud voice wished them "Good bye!"

They had sailed about a league, when he called his nephew to him, and said—"Now, Mark, my lad, you are to pass yourself off for the skipper whom we have set adrift. I shall act as your mate. We shall proceed direct to London, deliver the cargo as consigned, and I am off with my vessel again—and, in taking my own, who dare say that I rob any man?"

They arrived in London, the cargo was delivered. They were ready to sail for France, when Launcelot heard that his old friend, Mr Foster, late member for Northumberland, and General of the Chevalier's forces south of the Tweed, was still in Newgate, and that in a few weeks he would be led to the scaffold. Launcelot had risked his life frequently, and he was not the man who would not risk it again to save a friend. In the disguise of a Northumbrian farmer he gained admission into Newgate. How he accomplished the rest of his task remains a mystery; but certain it is, that with him General Foster escaped from his cell, and in the brig was conveyed safely to France.

I have but little more to add; Launcelot Errington gave up the brig to his nephew, who continued to trade with success from the French ports to the Mediterranean. When a general pardon was granted to all who had been engaged in the Chevalier's cause, the uncle and nephew returned to their native land. Launcelot lived for more than thirty years after his taking of Holy Island fortress, and died in Newcastle in 1746, from grief and old age, on hearing the result of the battle of Culloden.

I have but another word to add respecting his nephew Mark. When he returned to his native land, Sally Beadnell gave him her hand; and to their children and their grandchildren, when half a century had passed, they told the tale of Holy Island Castle, of Berwick gaol, and the pea-stack; and if there be aught strange in it, it is as true as strange.

WILSON'S
Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative
TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE TWIN BROTHERS.

William Sim was the son of a feuar in the southern part of Dumfriesshire, who, by dint of frugality, had hoarded together from three to four hundred pounds. This sum he was resolved to employ in setting up his son in business; and, in pursuance of this resolution, at the age of fourteen, William was bound as an apprentice to a wealthy old grocer in Carlisle; and it was his fortune in a few months to ingratiate himself into the favour and confidence of his master. The grocer had a daughter, who, though not remarkable for the beauty of her face or the elegance of her person, had nevertheless an agreeable countenance, and ten thousand independent charms to render it more agreeable. She was some eighteen months older than William; and, when he first came to be an apprentice with her father, and a boarder in his house, she looked upon him as quite a boy, while she considered herself to be a full-grown woman. He was, indeed, a mere boy—and a clownish-looking boy too. He wore a black leathern cap, edged and corded with red, which his mother called a *bendy;* a coarse grey jacket; a waistcoat of the same; and his trousers were of a brownish-green cord, termed *thickset.* His shoes were of the double-soled description, which ought more properly to be called brogues; and into them, on the evening previous to his departure, his father had driven tackets and sparables innumerable, until they became like a plate of iron, or a piece of warlike workmanship, resembling the scaled cuirass of a mailed knight in the olden time; "for," said he, "the callant will hae runnin' about on the causeway and plainstanes o' Carlisle, sufficient to drive a' the shoon in the world aff his feet." When, therefore, William Sim made his debut behind the counter of Mr Carnaby, the rich grocer of Carlisle, and as he ran on a message through the streets, with his bendy cap, grey jacket, thickset trousers, and ironed shoes, striking fire behind him as he ran, and making a noise like a troop of cavalry, the sprucer youngsters of the city said he was "new caught." But William Sim had not been two years in Carlisle when he began to shew his shirt collar; his clattering brogues gave place to silent pumps, his leathern bendy to a fashionable hat, and his coarse grey jacket to a coat with tails. Moreover, he began to bow and smile to the ladies when they entered the shop; he also became quite a connoisseur in teas and confections; he recommended them to them, and he bowed and smiled again as they left. Such was the work of less than two years; and before three went round, there was not a smarter or a better dressed youth in all Carlisle than William Sim, He became a favourite subject of conversation amongst the young belles; and there was not one of them, who, if disengaged, would have said to him—"Get thee behind me." Miss Carnaby heard the conversation of her young companions, and she gradually became conscious that William was not a boy; in fact, she began to wonder how she had ever thought so, for he, as she said unto herself, was "certainly a very interesting *young man.*" Within other four years, and before the period of his apprenticeship had expired, William began to repeat poetry—some said to write it, but that was not the fact; he only twisted or altered a few words now and then, to suit the occasion; and almost every line ended with words of such soft sounds as bliss, kiss—love, dove—joy, cloy—and others equally sweet—the delightful meanings of which are only to be met with in the sentimental glossary. He now gave Miss Carnaby his arm to church; and, on leaving it in the afternoons, they often walked into the fields together. On such occasions,

"Talk of various kinds deceived the road."

and even when they were silent, their silence had an eloquence of its own. One day they had wandered farther than their wont, and they stood on the little bridge where the two kingdoms meet, about half a mile below Gretna. I know not what soft persuasion he employed, but she accompanied him up the hill which leadeth through the village of Springfield, and they went towards the far-famed Green together. In less than an hour, Miss Carnaby that was, returned towards Carlisle as Mrs Sim, leaning affectionately on her husband's arm.

When the old grocer heard of what had taken place, he was exceedingly wroth; and although, as has been said, William stood high in his favour, he thus addressed him—

"Ay, ay, sir!—fine doings! This comes of your Sunday walking! And I suppose you say that my daughter is yours—that she is your wife; and *she* may be *yours*—but I'll let you know, sir, my *money* is *mine;* and I'll cut you both off. You shan't have a sixpence. I'll rather build a church, sir—I'll give it towards paying off the national debt, you rascal. You would steal my daughter—eh!"

Thus spoke Mr Carnaby in his wrath; but, when the effervescence of his indignation had subsided, he extended to both the hand of forgiveness, and resigned his business in favour of his son-in-law.

Mr William Sim, therefore, began the world under the most favourable circumstances. He found a fortune prepared to his hands—he had only to improve it. In a few years, the old grocer died; and he bequeathed to them the gains of half a century. For twenty years, Mr Sim continued in business, and he had nearly doubled the fortune which he obtained with his wife. Mrs Sim was a kind-hearted woman; but, by nature, or through education, she had also a considerable portion of vanity; and she began to think that it was the duty of her opulent husband to retire from business, and assume the character of an independent gentleman; or rather, I ought to say, of a country gentleman—a squire. She professed to be the more anxious that he should do this, on account of the health of their daughter—the sole survivor of five children—and who was then entering upon womanhood. Maria Sim (for such was their daughter's name) was a delicate and accomplished girl of seventeen. The lovely hue that dwelt upon her cheeks, like the blush of a rainbow, was an emblem of beauty, not of health. At the solicitations of her mother, her father gave up his business, and purchased a neat villa, and a few acres that surrounded it, in the neighbourhood of Windermere. The house lay in the bosom of poetry, and the winds that shouted like a triumphant army through the mountain glens, or in gentle zephyrs sighed upon the lake, and gamboled with the ripples, made music around it.

The change, the beauty, I had almost said the deliciousness of their place of abode, had effected a wondrous improvement in the health of Maria; yet her mother was not happy. She was not treated by her neighbours with the obsequious reverence which she believed to be due to persons

possessed of twenty thousand pounds. The fashionable ladies in the neighbourhood, also, called her "a mean person"—"a nobody"—"an upstart of yesterday." In truth, there were not a few who so spoke, because they envied the wealth of the Sims, and were resolved to humble them.

An opportunity for them to do so soon occurred. A subscription ball or assembly, patronised by all the fashionables in the district, was to take place at Keswick. Mrs Sim, in some measure from a desire of display, and also, as she said, to bring out Maria, put down her husband's name, her own, and their daughter's, on the list. Many of the personages above referred to, on seeing the names of the Sim family on the subscription paper, turned upon their heel, and exclaimed —"Shocking!"

But the important evening arrived. Mrs Sim had ordered a superb dress from London expressly for the occasion. A duchess might have worn it at a drawing-room. The dress of Maria was simplicity typified, and consisted of a frock of the finest and the whitest muslin; while her slender waist was girdled with a lavender ribbon, her raven hair descended down her snowy neck in ringlets, and around her head she wore a wreath of roses.

When Mr Sim, with his wife and daughter, entered the room, there was a stare of wonderment amongst the company. No one spoke to them, no one bowed to them. The spirit of dumbness seemed to have smitten the assembly. But a general whispering, like the hissing of a congregation of adders, succeeded the silence. Then, at the head of the room, the voices of women rose sharp, angry, and loud. Six or eight, who appeared as the representatives of the company, were in earnest and excited conversation with the stewards; and the words, "low people!"—"vulgar!"—"not to be borne!"—"cheese! faugh!"—"impertinence!"—"must be humbled!"—became audible throughout the room. One of the stewards, a Mr Morris of Morris House, approached Mr Sim, and said—

"You, sir, are Mr Sim, I believe, late grocer and cheesemonger in Carlisle?"

"I suppose, sir," replied the other, 'you know that without me telling you—if you do not, you have some right to know me."

"Well, sir," continued the steward of the assembly, 'I come to inform you that you have made a mistake. This is not a *social dance* amongst *tradesmen*, but an *assembly* of *ladies* and *gentlemen*; therefore, sir, your presence cannot be allowed here."

Poor Maria became blind, the hundred different headdresses seemed to float around her. She clung to her father's arm for support. Her mother was in an agony of indignation.

"Sir," said Mr Sim, "I don't know what you call *gentlemen*, but if it be not *genteel* to have sold teas and groceries, it is at least more *honourable* than to use them and never pay for them. You will remember, sir, there is five hundred pounds standing against you in my books; and if the money be not paid to me to-night, you shall have less space to dance in before morning."

"Insolent barbarian!" exclaimed Squire Morris, stamping his foot upon the floor.

Mrs Sim screamed—Maria's head fell upon her father's shoulder. A dozen gentlemen approached to the support of the steward; and one of them, waving his hand and addressing Mr Sim, said—"Away, sir!"

The retired merchant bowed and withdrew, not in confusion, but with a smile of malignant triumph. He strove to soothe his wife—for his daughter, when relieved from the presence of the disdainful eyes that gazed on her, bore the insult that had been offered them meekly—and, after remaining an hour in Keswick, they returned to their villa in the same chaise in which they had arrived.

In the assembly room, the dance began, and fairy forms glided through the floor, lightly, silently, as a falling blossom embraceth the earth. Mr Morris was leading down a dance when a noise was heard at the door. Some person insisted on being admitted, and the door-keepers resisted him. But the intruder carried with him a small staff, on the one end of which was a brass crown, and on its side the letters G. R. It was a talisman potent as the wand of a magician; the door-keepers became powerless before it. The intruder entered the room—he passed through the mazes of the whirling dance—he approached Mr Morris—he touched him on the shoulder—he put a piece of paper in his hand—he whispered in his ear—

"You are my prisoner!—come with me!"

His lady and his daughters were present, and they felt most bitterly the indignity which a low tradesman had offered them. Confusion paralysed them; they stood still in the middle of the dance, and one of the young ladies swooned away and fell upon the ground. The time, the place, the manner of the arrest, all bespoke malignant and premeditated insult.

Mr Morris gnashed his teeth together, but, without speaking, accompanied the officer that had arrested him in the room. He remained in custody in an adjoining inn throughout the night; on the following day, was released on bail; and, within a week, his solicitor paid the debt by augmenting the mortgage on Morris House estate.

It is hardly necessary to say (for such is human nature) that, after this incident, the hatred between Mr Sim and Squire Morris became inveterate; and the wives of both, and the daughters of the latter, partook in the relentless animosity. Two years passed, and every day the mutual hatred and contempt in which they held each other increased. At that period, a younger son of Squire Morris, who was a lieutenant in the service of the East India Company, obtained leave to visit England and his friends. It was early in June; the swallows chased each other in sport, twittering as they flew over the blue bosom of Windermere. Every bush, every tree—yea, it seemed as if every branch sent forth the music of singing birds, and the very air was redolent with melody, from the bold songs of the thrush and the lark to the love note of the wood-pigeon; and even the earth rejoiced in the chirp of the grasshopper—its tiny but pleasant musician. The fields and the leaves were in the loveliness and freshness of youth, luxuriating in the sunbeams, in the depth of their summer green; and the butterfly sported, and the bee pursued its errand from flower to flower. The mighty mountains circled the scene, and threw their dun shadow on the lake, where, a thousand fathom deep, they seemed a bronzed and inverted world. At this time, Maria Sim was sailing upon the lake in a small boat that her father had purchased for her, and which was guided by a boy.

A sudden, but not what could be called a strong breeze, came away. The boy had little strength and less skill, and from his awkwardness in shifting the sail, he caused the boat to overset. Maria was immersed in the lake. The boy clung to the boat, but terror deprived him of ability to render her assistance. She struggled with the waters, and her garments bore her partially up for a time. A boat, in which was a young gentleman, had been sailing to and fro, and, at the time the accident occurred, was within three hundred yards of her. On hearing her sudden cry, and the continued screams of the boy, he drew in his sail, and, taking the oars, at his utmost strength pulled to her assistance. Almost at every third stroke he turned round his head to see the progress he had made, or if he had yet reached her. Twice he beheld her disappear beneath the water—a third time she rose to the surface—he was within a few yards of her. He sprang from his boat. She was again sinking. He dived after her, he raised her beneath his arm, and succeeded in placing her in his boat—he also rescued the boy, and conveyed them both to land.

Maria, though for a time speechless, was speedily. through

the exertions of her deliverer, restored to consciousness. Even before she was capable of thanking him or of speaking to him—yea, before her eyes had opened to meet his—he had gazed with admiration on her beautiful features, which were lovely, though the shadow of death was then over them, almost its hand upon them. In truth, he had never gazed upon a fairer face, and when she spoke he had never listened to a sweeter or a gentler voice. He had been beneath an Indian sun, where the impulses of the heart are fervid as the clime, and where, when the sun is gazed upon, its influence is acknowledged. But, had she been less beautiful than she was, and her features less lovely to look upon, there was a strong something in the very manner and accident of their being brought into each other's society, which appealed more powerfully to the heart than beauty could. It, at least, begot an interest in the fate of each other; and an interest, so called, is never very widely separated from affection. The individual who had saved Maria's life was Lieutenant Morris.

He conveyed her first to a peasant's cottage, and afterwards to her father's villa. He knew nothing of the feeling of hatred that existed between their families; and when Mr Sim heard his name, though for a moment it caused a glow to pass over his face, every other emotion was speedily swallowed up in gratitude towards the deliverer of his child; and when Maria was sufficiently recovered to thank him, though she knew him to be the son of her father's enemy, it was with tears too deep for words—tears that told what eloquence would have failed to express. Even Mrs Sim, for the time, forgot her hatred of the parents in her obligations to the son.

When, however, the young lieutenant returned to Morris House, and made mention of the adventure in which he had been engaged, and spoke, at the same time, in the ardour of youthful admiration, of the beauty and gentleness of the fair being he had rescued from untimely death, the cheeks of his sisters became pale, their eyeballs distended as if with horror. The word "wretch!" escaped from his mother's lips, and she seemed struggling with smothered rage. He turned towards his father for an explanation of the change that had so suddenly come over the behaviour of his mother and sisters.

"Son!" said the Squire, "I had rather thou hadst perished than that a son of mine should have put forth his hand to assist a dog of the man whose daughter thou hast saved!"

On being made acquainted with the cause of the detestation that existed between the two families, Lieutenant Morris, in some degree, yielded to the whisperings of wounded pride, and began to regret that he had entered the house of a man who had offered an indignity to his father that was not to be forgiven. But he thought also of the beauty of Maria, of the sweetness of her smile, and of the tears of voiceless gratitude which he had seen bedimming the lustre of her bright eyes.

He had promised to call again at her father's on the day after the accident; and with an ardent kindliness Mr Sim had welcomed him to do so. But he went forth, he wandered by the side of the lake, he approached within sight of the house, there was a contention of strange feelings in his breast, and he returned without paying his promised visit. Nevertheless, thoughts of Maria haunted him, and her image mingled with all his fancies. She became as a spirit in his memory that he could not expel, and that he would not if he could.

Three weeks passed on—it was evening—the sun was sinking behind the mountains, and Lieutenant Morris was wandering through a wooded vale, towards Mr Sim's mansion; for, though he entered it not, he nightly drew towards it, as if instinctively, wandering around it, and gazing on its windows as he did so, marvelling as he gazed. He was absorbed in one of those dreamy reveries in which men saunter, speak, and muse unconsciously, when, in following the windings of a footpath which led through a thicket, he suddenly found himself in the presence of a young lady, who was walking slowly across the wood with a book in her hand. Their eyes met—they startled—the book dropped by her side—it was Maria.

I must not, however, dwell longer on this part of the subject; for the story of the twin brothers is yet to begin. Let it be sufficient to say, that William, or, as I have hitherto called him, Lieutenant Morris, and Maria whom he saved, became attached to each other. Their dispositions were similar—they seemed formed for each other. Affection took deep root in their hearts, and to root up that affection in the breast of either was to destroy the heart itself. He made known his attachment towards Maria to his father; and galled pride and hatred to those who had injured him being stronger in the breast of the old squire than the small still voice of affection, he spurned his son from him, and ordered him to leave his house for ever.

The parents of Maria, notwithstanding their first feelings of gratitude towards the saviour of their daughter, were equally averse to a union between them; but with Maria the impulse of the heart and the lover's passionate prayer prevailed over her parents' frowns. They were wed, they became all to each other, and were disowned by those who gave them birth.

When Lieutenant Morris left India, he obtained permission to remain in England for three years; and it was about twelve months after his arrival that the marriage between him and Maria took place. He had still two years to spend in his native land, and he hired a secluded and neat cottage on the banks of the Annan for that period, for the residence of himself and his young and beautiful wife.

Twelve months after their marriage, Maria became the mother of twins—the twin brothers of our tale. But three months had not passed, nor had her infants raised their first smile towards their mother's face, when the sterile hand of death touched the bosom that supplied them with life. The young husband wept by the bed of death, with the hand of her he loved in his.

"William!" said the gentle Maria—and they were her dying words, for she spoke not again—"my eyes will not behold another sun! I must leave you, love! O my husband! I must leave our poor, our helpless infants! It is hard to die thus! But when I am gone, dearest—when my babes have no mother—oh, go to *my mother*, and tell her—tell her, William—that it was the dying request of her Maria, that she would be as a mother to them. Farewell, love!—farewell! If"——

Emotion and the strugglings of death overpowered her—her speech failed—her eyes became fixed—her soul passed away, and the husband sat in stupefaction and in agony, holding the hand of his dead wife to his breast. He became conscious that she stirred not—that she breathed not—oh! that she was not!—and the wail of the distracted widower rang suddenly and wildly through the cottage, startling his infants from their slumber, and, as some who stood round the bed said, causing even the features of the dead to move, as though the departed spirit had lingered, casting a farewell glance upon the body, and passed over it again, as the voice it had loved to hear rose loud in agony.

The father of Maria came and attended her body to its last, long resting-place. But he did no more; and he left the churchyard without acknowledging that he perceived his grief-stricken son-in-law.

In a few months it was necessary for Lieutenant Morris to return to India, and he could not take his motherless and tender infants thither. He wrote to the parents of his departed Maria; he told them of her last request, breathed by her last words; he implored them, as they had once loved her, during his absence to protect his children.

But the hatred between Mr Sim and Squire Morris had

in no degree abated. The former would have listened to his daughter's prayer, and taken her twins and the nurse into his house; but his wife was less susceptible to the influence of natural feeling, and even, while at intervals she wept for poor Maria, she said—

"Take both of them, indeed! No! no! I loved our poor, thoughtless, disobedient Maria, Mr Sim, as well as you did, but I will not submit to the Morrises. They have nothing to give the children—we have. But they have the same, they have a greater right to provide for them than we have. They shall take one of them, or none of them come into this house." And again she broke into lamentations over the memory of Maria, and, in the midst of her mourning, exclaimed—"But the child that we take shall never be called Morris."

Mr Sim wrote an answer to his son-in-law, as cold and formal as if it had been a note added to an invoice—colder, indeed, for it had no equivalent to the poor, hacknied phrase in all such, of "*esteemed favours*." In it he stated that he would "bring up" one of the children, provided that Squire Morris would undertake the charge of the other. The unhappy father clasped his hands together on perusing the letter, and exclaimed—

"Must my poor babes be parted?—shall they be brought up to hate each other? O Maria! would that I had died with you, and our children also!"

To take them to India with him, where a war was threatened, was impossible, and his heart revolted from the thought of leaving them in this country with strangers. At times he was seen, with an infant son on each arm, sitting over the stone upon the grave of their mother which he had reared to her memory, kissing their cheeks and weeping over them, while they smiled in his face unconsciously, and offered to him, in those smiles, affection's first innocent tribute. On such occasions, their nurse stood gazing on the scene, wondering at her master's grief.

Morris, of Morris House, reluctantly consented to take one of his grandchildren under his care; but, at the same time, he refused to see his son previous to his departure.

The widowed father wept over his twin sons, and invoking a blessing on them, saw their little arms sundered, and each conveyed to the houses of those who had undertaken to be their protectors, while he again proceeded towards India. The names of the twins were George and Charles; the former was committed to the care of Mr Morris, the other to Mr Sim. Yet it seemed as if these innocent pledges of a family union, instead of destroying, strengthened the deep-rooted animosity that existed between them. Not a month passed that they did not, in some way, manifest their hatred of, and their persecution towards each other.

The Squire exhibited a proof of his vindictiveness, in not permitting the child of his son to remain beneath his roof. He had a small property in Devonshire, which was rented by an individual who, with his wife, had been servants under his father. To them George Morris, one of the infant sons of poor Maria, before he was yet twelve months old, was sent, with an injunction that he should be brought up as their own son, that he should be taught to consider himself as such, and bear their name.

The boy Charles, whose lot it was to be placed under the protection of his mother's parents, was more fortunate. The love they had borne towards their Maria they now lavished upon him. They called him by their own name—they spoke of him as their heir, as their *sole* heir, and they inquired not after his brother. That brother became included in the hatred which Mrs Sim, at least, bore to his father's family. As he grew up, his father's name was not mentioned in his presence. He was taught to call his grandfather—father; and his grandmother—mother; and, withal, his mother, so called, instilled into his earliest thoughts an abhorrence of the inmates of Morris House. At times, his grandfather whispered to her on such occasions—"Do not do the like of that, dear—we know not how it may end." But she regarded not his admonitions, and she strove that her grandchild should hold the very name of Morris in hatred.

The peasants to whose keeping George was confided, occupied, as has been stated, a small farm under his grandfather, which lay on the banks of the Dart, a few miles from Totness. Their name was Prescot; they were cold-hearted and ignorant people; they had no children of their own, nor affection for those of others; neither had they received instructions to shew any to him whom they were to adopt as a son; and, if they had been arraigned for not doing so, they were of a character to have said, with Shylock—"It is not in the bond." When he grew up, there was then no school in that part of Devonshire to which they could have sent him, had they been inclined—but they were not inclined; though, if they had had the power to educate him, they could have referred again to their bond, and said that no injunction to educate him was mentioned there. His first ideas were a consciousness of cruelty and oppression. At seven years of age he was sent to herd a few sheep upon Dartmoor; before he was nine, he was placed as a parish apprentice to the owner of a tin mine, and buried from the light of heaven.

Often and anxiously Lieutenant Morris wrote from India, inquiring after his sons. He sent presents—love gifts to each; but his letters were unheeded, his presents disregarded. His children grew up in ignorance of his existence, or of the existence of each other.

It was about eighteen years after the death of Maria, and what is called an annual *Revel* was held at Ashburton. Prizes were to be awarded to the best wrestlers, and hundreds were assembled from all parts of Devonshire to witness the sports of the day. Two companies of soldiers were stationed in the town at the time, and the officers, at the suggestion of a young ensign, called Charles Sim, agreed to subscribe a purse of ten guineas towards the encouragement of the games. The young ensign was from Cumberland, where the science of wrestling is still a passion, and he, as the reader will have anticipated from the name he bore, was none other than one of the twin brothers. The games were skilfully and keenly contested; and a stripling from the neighbourhood of Totness, amidst the shouts of the multitude, was declared the victor. The last he had overcome was a gigantic soldier, a native of Cumberland. When the young ensign beheld his champion overcome, his blood rose for the honour of his native county, and he regretted that he had not sustained it in his own person.

The purse subscribed by the officers was still to be wrestled for, and the stripling victor re-entered the ring to compete for it. On his design being perceived, others who wished to have contended for it drew back, and he stood in the ring alone, no one daring to come forward to compete with him. The umpire of the games was proclaiming that, if no one stood against him, the purse would be awarded to him who had already been pronounced the victor of the day, when Ensign Sim, who, with his brother officers, had witnessed the sports from the windows of an adjacent inn, said—

"Well, the lad shall have the purse, though I don't expect he will win it; for, if no one else will, I shall give him a throw, to redeem the credit of old Cumberland."

"Bravo, Sim!" cried his brother officers, and they accompanied him towards the ring.

The people again shouted when they perceived that there was to be another game, and the more so when they discovered that the stranger competitor was a gentleman. The ensign, having cast off his regimentals, and equipped himself in the strait canvass jacket worn by wrestlers, entered the ring But now arose a new subject of wonderment, which in a moment was perceived by the whole multitude; and the loud huzzas that had welcomed his approach were hushed in a confused murmur of astonishment.

"Zwinge.' exclaimed a hundred voices, as they approached each other, "they be loik one anoother as two beans!"

"Whoy, which be which?" inquired others.

The likeness between the two wrestlers was, indeed, remarkable; their age, their stature, the colour of their hair, their features, were alike. Spectators could not trace a difference between the one and the other. The ensign had a small and peculiar mark below his chin—he perceived that his antagonist had the same. They approached each other, extending their arms for the contest. They stood still, they gazed upon each other; as they gazed they started—their arms dropped by their sides—they stood anxiously scrutinizing the countenance of each other, in which each saw himself as in a glass. Astonishment deprived them of strength—they forgot the purpose for which they met—they stretched forth their hands, they grasped them together, and stood eagerly looking into each other's eyes.

"Friend," said the ensign, "this is indeed singular—our extraordinary resemblance to each other fills me with amazement. What is your name?—from whence do you come?"

"Whoy, master," rejoined the other, "thou art so woundy like myself, that had I met thee anywhere but in the middle o' these folk, I should have been afeared that I was agoing to die, and had zeen mysel. My name is George Prescot, at your sarvice. I coom from three miles down the river there—and what may they call thee?"

"My name," replied the soldier, "is Charles Sim. I am an orphan; my parents I never saw. And tell me—for this strange resemblance between us almost overpowers me—do yours live?"

"Whoy," was the reply, "old Tom Prescot and his woif be alive; and they zay as how they be my vather and moother, and I zuppose they be; but zoom cast up to them that they bean't."

No wrestling match took place between them; but hand in hand they walked round the ring together, while the spectators gazed upon them in silent wonder.

The ensign presented the youth, who might have been styled his *fac-simile*, with the purse subscribed by his brother officers and himself; and, in so doing, he offered to double its contents. But the youth, with a spirit above his condition, peremptorily refused the offer, and said—

"No, master—thank you the zame—I will take nothing but what I have won."

Charles was anxious to visit "old Tom Prescot and his wife," of whom the stranger had spoken; but the company to which he belonged was to march forward to Plymouth on the following day, and there to embark. His brother officers also dissuaded him from the thought.

"Why, Sim," said they, "the likeness between you and the conqueror of the ring was certainly a very pretty coincidence, and your meeting each other quite a drama. But, my good fellow," added they, laughing, "take the advice of older heads than your own—don't examine too closely into your father's faults."

Three years passed, and Charles, now promoted to the rank of a lieutenant, accompanied the Duke of York in his more memorable than brilliant campaign in Holland. A soldier was accused of having been found sleeping on guard; he was tried, found guilty, and condemned to be shot. A corporal's guard was accompanying the doomed soldier from the place where sentence had been pronounced against him to the prison-house, from whence he was to be brought forth for execution on the following day. Lieutenant Sim passed near them. A voice exclaimed—

"Master! master!—save me! save me!"

It was the voice of the condemned soldier. The lieutenant turned round; and in the captive who called to him for assistance, he recognised the Devonshire wrestler—the strange portrait of himself. And even now, if it were possible, the resemblance between them was more striking than before; for, in the stranger, the awkwardness of the peasant had given place to the smartness of the soldier. Charles had felt an interest in him from the first moment he beheld him; he had wished to meet him again, and had resolved to seek for him should he return to England; and now the interest that he had before felt for him was increased tenfold. The offence and the fate of the doomed one were soon told. The lieutenant pledged himself that he would leave no effort untried to save him; and he redeemed his pledge. He discovered, he obtained proof, that the condemned prisoner, George Prescot, had been employed on severe and dangerous duties, against which it was impossible for nature longer to stand up, but in all of which he had conducted himself as a good, a brave, and a faithful soldier; and, more, that it could not be proved that he was actually found asleep at his post, but that he was stupified through excess of fatigue.

He hastened to lay the evidence he had obtained respecting the conduct and innocence of the prisoner before his Royal Highness, who, whatever were his faults, was, at least, the soldier's friend. The Duke glanced over the documents which the lieutenant laid before him; he listened to the evidence of the comrades of the prisoner. He took a pen—he wrote a few lines—he placed them in the hands of Lieutenant Sim. They contained the free pardon of Private Prescot. Charles rushed with the pardon in his hand to the prisoner—he exclaimed—

"Take this—you are pardoned—you are free!"

The soldier would have embraced his knees to thank him; but the lieutenant said—

"No! kneel not to me—consider me as a brother. I have merely saved the life of an innocent and deserving man. But the strange resemblance between us seems to me more than a strange coincidence. You have doubts regarding your parentage; I know but little of mine. Nature has written a mystery on our faces which we need to have explained. When this campaign is over, we shall inquire concerning it. Farewell for the present; but we must meet again."

The feelings of the reprieved and unlettered soldier were too strong for his words to utter: he shook the hand of his deliverer and wept.

A few days after this, some sharp fighting took place. The loss of the British was considerable, and they were compelled to continue their retreat, leaving their dead, and many of their wounded, exposed, as they fell behind them. When they again arrived at a halting-place, Lieutenant Sim sought the regiment to which the soldier who might be termed his second self, belonged. But he was not to be found; and all that he could learn respecting him was, that, three days before, George Prescot had been seen fighting bravely; but that he fell covered with wounds, and in their retreat was left upon the field.

Tears gushed into the eyes of the lieutenant when he heard the tidings. His singular meeting with the stranger in Devonshire—their mysterious resemblance to each other—his meeting him again in Holland, under circumstances yet more singular—his saving his life—and the dubious knowledge which each had respecting their birth and parentage—all had sunk deep into his heart, and thoughts of these things chased sleep from his pillow.

It was but a short time after this, that the regiment of Lieutenant Sim was ordered to India, and he accompanied it; and it was only a few months after his arrival, when the Governor-General gave an entertainment at his palace, at which all the military officers around were present. At table, opposite to Lieutenant Sim, sat a man of middle age; and, throughout the evening, his eyes remained fixed upon him, and occasionally seemed filled with tears. He was a Colonel in the Company's service, and a man who, by the force of merit, had acquired wealth and reputation.

"I crave your pardon, sir," said he, addressing the lieutenant; "but, if I be not too bold, a few words with you in private would confer a favour upon me, and, if my conjectures be right, will give us both cause to rejoice."

"You may command me, sir," said the youth.

The colonel rose from the table and left the room, and the lieutenant rose also and accompanied him. They entered an adjoining apartment. The elder soldier gazed anxiously on the face of the younger, and again addressing him, said—

"Sir, do not attribute this strange behaviour upon my part to rudeness. It has been prompted by feelings painfully, deeply, I may add, tenderly interesting to me. It may be accident, but your features bring memories before my eyes that have become a part of my soul's existence. Nor is it your features only, but I have observed that there is the mark of a rose-bud beneath your chin. I remember twins on whom that mark was manifest, and the likeness of a countenance is graven upon my heart, the lineaments of which were as yours are. Forgive me, then, sir, in thus abruptly requesting your name."

The lieutenant looked surprised at the anxiety and looks of the stranger, and he answered—

"My name is Charles Sim."

"Yes! yes!" replied the colonel, gasping as he spoke—"I saw it—I felt it! Your name is Charles, but not Sim—that was your mother's name—your sainted mother's. You bear it from your grandfather. You come from Cumberland?"

"I do!" was the reply, in accents of astonishment.

"My son! my son!—child of my Maria!" were the accents that broke from the colonel, as he fell upon the neck of the other.

"My father!" exclaimed Charles, "have I then found a father?" And the tears streamed down his cheeks.

Many questions were asked, many answered; and amongst others, the father inquired—

"Where is your brother—my little George?—does he live? You were the miniatures of your mother, and so strikingly did you resemble each other, that, while you were infants, it was necessary to tie a blue ribbon round his arm and a green one round yours, to distinguish you from each other.'

Charles became pale—his knees shook—his hands trembled.

"Then I *had* a brother!" he cried.

"You had," replied his father; "but wherefore do you say you *had* a brother? Is it possible that you do not know him? He has been brought up with my father—Mr Morris of Morris House."

"No, he has not," replied Charles; "the man you speak of, and whom you say is my grandfather, has brought up no one—none of my age. I have hated him from childhood, for he has hated me; and, but that you have told me he is my grandfather, I would hate him still. But he has brought up no one that could be a brother of mine."

"Then my child has died in infancy," rejoined the colonel.

"No, no," added Charles—"I knew not that I had a brother, not even that I had a father; but, you say, my brother resembled me—that I from my birth had the mark beneath my chin which I have now, and that he had the same:—then I know him—I have seen my brother!"

"Where—where—when—when?" breathlessly inquired the anxious parent; "speak, my son!—oh, speak!"

"Shortly after I had joined my regiment," continued Charles, "I was present in Devonshire, at what is called a revel. Our mess gave a purse towards the games. We put forward a Cumberland man belonging to the regiment, in the full confidence that he would be the victor of the day; but a youth, a mere youth, threw not only our champion, but all who dared to oppose him. I was stung for the honour of Cumberland—I was loath to see the hero carry his laurels so easily from the field. I accoutred myself in the wrestler's garb—I entered the ring. The shouting of the multitude ceased instantaneously. I gazed upon my antagonist, he gazed upon me. Our hands fell—we both shook—we were the image of each other. Three years afterwards, I was in Holland. A soldier was unjustly condemned to die—I saved him—I obtained his pardon—he was my strange counterpart whom I met in Devonshire. He had the mark of the rose-bud beneath his chin that I have, and which, you say my brother has."

"And where is he now?" eagerly inquired the colonel.

"Alas! I know not," answered Charles; "nor do I think he lives. Three days after I had rescued him from unmerited death, I learned that he had fallen bravely on the field; and whether he be now a prisoner or with the dead, I cannot tell."

"Surely it was thy brother," said the colonel; "yet how he should be in Devonshire, or a soldier in the ranks, puzzles me to think. No, no, Charles; it cannot be—it is a coincidence heightened by imagination. Your grandfather has not been kind to me, but he is not capable of the cruelty which the tale you have told would imply he had exercised towards the child I intrusted to his care. He hates me; but surely he could not be cruel to my offspring. You know Morris House?" he added.

"I know it well," replied Charles; "but I never knew in it one who could be my brother, nor one of my age; neither did I know Mr Morris to be my grandfather; nor yet have I heard of him, but as one who had injured my mother while she lived, and who had been the enemy of her parents."

"Enough, enough, my son," said the colonel—"my soul is filled with words which I cannot utter. I weep for your angel-mother—I weep for my son, your brother—and I mourn for the unceasing hatred that exists between your grandsires. But, Charles, we must return to England; we must do so instantly. I have now fortune enough for you, and for your brother also, if he yet live, and if we can find him. But we must inquire after and go in quest of him."

Within three months, Charles Morris, or Lieutenant Sim, as he has hitherto been called, and his father, returned to England together. But, instead of following them, I shall return to George Prescot, the prize-wrestler and the condemned and pardoned soldier. It has been mentioned that he was wounded and left upon the field by a retreating army. I have to add, that he was made prisoner; and, when his wounds were healed, he was, though not perceptibly, disabled for active service. Amongst his brethren in captivity was a Captain Paling, who, when an exchange of prisoners took place, hastened to join his regiment, and gave George, who was deemed unfit for service, a letter to his mother and sisters, who resided in Dartmouth. The letter was all that the captain could give him; for he was penniless as George was himself.

George Prescot, feeling himself once more at liberty, took his passage from Rotterdam in a sloop bound for Dartmouth, and with only the letter of Captain Paling in his pocket to pay for his conveyance. He perceived that the skipper frequently cast suspicious glances towards him, as though he were about to ask—"Where is your money, sir?" But George saw this, and he bore it down with a high hand. He knew that the certain way of being treated with the contempt and neglect which poverty always introduces in its train, was to plead being poor. He was by no means learned, but he understood something of human nature, and he knew a good deal of the ways of men—of the shallowness of society, and the depths of civility. He therefore carried his head high. He called for the best that the ship could afford, and he fared as the skipper did, though he partook but sparingly.

But the vessel arrived in Dartmouth harbour—it entered the mouth of the romantic river, on the one side of which was the fort, still bearing the name of Cromwell, and on the other Kingsbridge, which Peter Pindar hath celebrated; while, on both sides, as precipitous banks, rose towering hills, their summits covered by a stunted furze, and the blooming orchard meeting it midway.

Some rather unpleasant sensations visited the disabled soldier as the vessel sailed up the river towards the town. The beauty of its situation made no impression upon him, for he had seen it a thousand times; and it was perhaps as well that it did not; for to look on it from the river or from a distant height—like a long line of houses hung on the breast of romance—and afterwards to enter it, and find yourself in the midst of a narrow, dingy street, where scarce two wheelbarrows could pass, produceth only disappointment, and that, too, of the bitterest kind. It seems, indeed, that the Devonians have conceded so much of their beautiful county to the barrenness of Dartmoor, that they grudge every inch that is occupied as a street or highway. Ere this time, George Prescot had, in a great measure, dropped his Devonshire dialect; and now, taking the letter of Captain Paling from his pocket, he placed it in the hands of the commander of the packet, saying—"Send your boy ashore with this to a widow lady's of the name of Paling—you will know her family, I suppose. You may tell the boy to say that the letter is from her son, Captain Paling, and that I shall wait here until I receive her answer, before proceeding up the river."

The skipper stated that he knew Mrs Paling well, who was a most respectable lady, and that he remembered also her son, who was an officer in the army, and who for some time had been a prisoner of war.

The boy went on shore with the letter, and within a quarter of an hour returned, having with him a young gentleman, accompanied by a couple of pointer dogs. The stranger was the brother of Captain Paling. He inquired for George Prescot, and, on seeing him, invited him to his mother's house. The skipper, on seeing his passenger in such respectable company, let fall no hint that the passage-money was not paid; and the soldier and the brother of Captain Paling went on shore together.

In his letter, the captain dwelt on many kindnesses which he had received from its bearer, and of the bravery which he had seen him evince on the field; informing them also that his pockets would be but ill provided with cash, and regretting his own inability to replenish them.

The kindness of Mrs Paling and her family towards him knew no limits. She asked him a hundred questions respecting her son, her daughters concerning their brother; and they imagined wants for him, that they might shew him a kindness. Now, however, twelve miles was all that lay between him and his home. They entreated him to remain ntil next day, but he refused; for

"Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

It is true he could hardly give the name of home to the house of those whom he called his parents, for it had ever been to him the habitation of oppressors: yet it was his home—as the mountain covered with eternal snow is the home of the Greenlander—and he knew no other. The usual road to it was by crossing the Dart at a ferry about a hundred yards above the house of Mrs Paling. Any other road caused a circuit of many miles.

"If you will not remain with us to-night," said the brother of Captain Paling, who had conducted him from the vessel to his mother's house, "I shall accompany you to the ferry."

"No, I thank you—I thank you," said George, confusedly, "there is no occasion for it—none whatever. I shall not forget your kindness."

He did not intend to go by the ferry; or, though the charge of the boatman was but a halfpenny, that halfpenny he had not in his possession; and he wished to conceal his poverty.

But women have sharp eyes in these matters—they see where men are blind; and a sister of Captain Paling, named Caroline, read the meaning of their guest's confusion, and of his refusing to permit her brother to accompany him to the shore; and, with a delicacy which spoke to the heart of him to whom the words were addressed, she said—"Mr Prescot, you have only now arrived from the Continent, and it is most likely that you have no small change in your pocket. The ferrymen are unreasonable people to deal with; if you give them a crown. they will row away and thank you, forgetting to return the change. The regular charge is but a halfpenny, therefore you had better take coppers with you." And, as she spoke, she held a halfpenny in her fingers towards him.

"Well, well," stammered out George, with his hand in his pocket, "I believe I have no coppers." And he accepted the halfpenny from the hand of Caroline Paling; and, while he did so, he could not conceal the tears that rose to his eyes.

But, trifling as the amount of her offer was, it must be understood that the person to whom it was tendered was one who would not have accepted more—who was ashamed of his poverty, and strove to conceal it—and there was a soul, there was a delicacy in her manner of tendering it, which I can speak of but not describe. It saved him also from having to wander weary and solitary miles at midnight.

No sooner had the disabled soldier crossed the river, and entered the narrow lanes overshadowed by dark hedges of hazel, than he burst into tears, and his first words were—"Caroline, I will remember thee!"

It was near midnight when he approached the house which he called his home. The inmates were asleep. He tapped at the window, the panes of which were framed in lead, after the form of diamonds.

"Who be there?" cried an angry voice.

"Your son!—your son!" he replied—"George!"

"Zon!" repeated the voice; "we have no zon. If it be thee, go to Coomberland, lad. We have noughts to do with thee. Thy old grandfather, Zquire Morris, be now dead, and he ha'n't paid us so well for what we have done, as to have oughts to zay to thee again—zo, good night, lad."

"Father!—mother!" cried George, striking more passionately on the window, "what do you mean?"

"Whoy, ha'n't I told thee?" answered the voice that had spoken to him before; "thou art no zon of ours. Thou moost go to Coomberland, man, to Zquire Morris—to his zeketors* I mean, for he is dead. They may tell thee who thou art—I can't. We ha'n't been paid for what we have done for thee already. However, thou may'st coom in for t'night." And, as the old man who had professed to be his father spoke, he arose and opened the door.

George entered the house, trembling with agitation.

"Father," he said—"for thou hast taught me to call thee father—and, if thou art not, tell me who I am."

"Ha'n't I told thee, lad?" answered the old man; "go to Coomberland—I know noughts about thee."

"To Cumberland!" exclaimed George—and he thought of the young officer whom he had twice met, who belonged to that county, and whose features were the picture of his own—"why should I go to Cumberland?"

"Whoy, I can't tell thee whoy thou shouldst go," said the old man; "but thou was zent me from there, and thou moost go back again—vor a bad bargain thou hast been to me. Zquire Morris zent thee here, and forgot to pay for thee; and, if thou lodgest here to-night, thou won't forget to be a-moving, bag and baggage, in the morning."

* Executors.

George was wearied, and glad to sleep beneath the inhospitable roof of those whom he had considered as his parents; but, on the following morning, he took leave of them, after learning from them all that they knew of his history.

But I must again leave him, and return to Colonel Morris, and his son Charles.

They came to England together, and hastened towards Morris House; and, there, the long disowned son learned that his father was dead, and that his mother and his sisters knew not where his child was, or what had become of him. But his kindred had ascertained that he was now rich, and they repented of their unkindness towards him.

"Son," said his mother, "I know nothing of thy child. Thy father was a strange man—he told little to me. If any one can tell thee aught concerning thy boy, it will be John Bell, the old coachman; but he has not been in the family for six years, and where he now is I cannot tell, though I believe he is still somewhere in the neighbourhood."

With sad and anxious hearts the Colonel and his son next visited the house of Mr Sim—the dwelling-place in which the infancy, the childhood, and what may be called the youth, of the latter had been passed.

Tears gathered in the eyes of Charles as he approached the door. He knew that his grandsire and his grandmother had acted wrongly towards him, in never speaking to him of his father, or making known to him that such a person lived; but when he again saw the house which had been the scene of a thousand happy days, round which he had chased the gaudy butterfly and the busy bee, or sought the nest of the chaffinch, the yellowhammer, and the hedge-sparrow, the feelings of boyhood rose too strong in his soul for resentment; and on meeting Mr Sim, (his grandfather,) as they approached the door of the house, Charles ran towards him, and, stretching out his hand, cried—"Father!"

The old man recognised him, and exclaimed, "Charles!—Charles!—child of my Maria!" and wept.

At the mention of her name, the colonel wept also.

"What gentleman is this with thee, Charles?" inquired Mr Sim.

"It is *my father!*" was the reply.

Mr Sim, who was now a grey-haired man, reeled back a few paces—he raised his hands—he exclaimed—"Can I be forgiven?"

"Forgiven!—ay, doubly forgiven!" answered Colonel Morris, "as the father of lost, loved Maria, and as having been more than a father to my boy who is now by my side. But know you nothing of my other son?—my Maria bore twins."

"Nothing! nothing!" replied Mr Sim; "that question has cost me many an anxious thought. It has troubled also the conscience of my wife—for it was her fault that he also was not committed to my charge; and I would have inquired after your child long ago, but that there was no good-will between your father and me; and I was a plain, retired citizen—he a magistrate, and a justice of the peace for the county, who could do no wrong."

The colonel groaned.

They proceeded towards the villa together. Mrs Sim met her grandson with a flood of tears, and, in her joy at meeting him, she forgot her dislike to his father, and her hatred to that father's family.

The colonel endeavoured to obtain information from his father-in-law respecting his other son; and he told him all that his mother had said, of what she had spoken regarding the coachman, and also of what Charles had told him, in twice meeting one who so strongly resembled himself.

"Colonel," said Mr Sim, "I know the John Bell your mother speaks of; he now keeps an inn near Langholm. To-morrow we shall go to his house and make inquiry concerning all that he knows."

"Be it so, father," said the colonel. And, on the following day, they took a chaise and set out together—the grandfather, the father, and the son.

They had to cross the Annan, and to pass the churchyard where Maria slept. As they drew near to it, the colonel desired the driver to stop.

"Follow me, Charles," he said; and Mr Sim accompanied them.

They entered the churchyard; the colonel led them to the humble grave-stone that he had raised to the memory of his Maria. He sat down upon it, he pressed his lips to it and wept.

"Charles," said he, "look on your mother's grave. Here on this stone, day after day, I was wont to sit with you and your brother upon my knee, fondling you, breathing your mother's name in your ears; and, though neither of you knew what I said, you smiled as I wept and spoke. O Charles! though you then filled my whole heart, (and you do now,) I could only distinguish you from each other by the ribbons on your arms. Would to Heaven that I may discover my child; and, whatever be his condition, I shall forgive my father for the injustice he has done me and mine—I shall be happy. And, oh! should we indeed find your brother—should he prove to be the youth whom you have twice met—I shall say that Heaven has remembered me when I forgot myself! But come hither, Charles—come, kneel upon your mother's grave—kiss the sod where she lies, and angels will write it in their books, and shew it to your mother, where she is happy. Come, my boy."

Charles knelt on his mother's grave. He had arisen, and they were about to depart; for his grandfather had accompanied them, and was a silent but tearful spectator of the scene.

They were leaving the churchyard, joined in the arms of each other, when two strangers entered it. The one was John Bell, the other George Prescot.

"Colonel! Colonel!—there is John Bell that you spoke of," exclaimed Mr Sim.

"Father! father!" at the same instant cried his son. "he is here—it is him!—my brother—or——he whom I have told you of, who so strangely resembles me!"

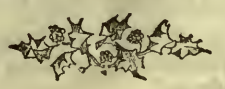
Charles rushed forward—it was George Prescot—and he took the proffered hand of the other, and said—"Sir, I rejoice to meet thee again—it seems I belong to Cumberland as well as thou dost; and this gentleman, (pointing to John Bell,) who seems to know more of me than I do myself, has promised to shew me here my mother's grave!"

"And where is that grave?" cried the colonel, earnestly who had been an interested spectator of all that passed.

"Even where the wife of your youth is buried, your honour," answered John Bell: "you have with you one son—behold his twin brother!"

The colonel pressed his new-found son to his breast. With his children he sat down on the stone over Maria's grave, and they wept together.

Our tale is told. Colonel Morris and his sons had met. His elder brothers died. and he became the heir of his father's property. Mr Sim also stated that, in his will, he should divide his substance equally between the brothers—and he did so. I have but another word to add. George forgot not Caroline Paling, who had assisted him when his heart was full and his pocket empty, and within twelve months he again visited Dartmouth; but, when he returned from it, Caroline accompanied him as his wife—and when he introduced her to his father and his brother, "Behold." said he, "what a halfpenny, delicately tendered, may produce."



WILSON'S
Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative
TALES OF THE BORDERS.

JUDITH THE EGYPTIAN;
OR,
THE FATE OF THE HEIR OF RICCON.

"The black-eyed Judith, fair and tall,
Attracted the heir of Riccon Hall.
* * * * *
For years and years was Judith known,
Queen of a wild world all her own;
By Wooler Haugh, by silver Till,
By Coldstream Bridge, and Flodden Hill
Until, at length, one morn when sleet
Hung frozen round the traveller's feet,
By a grey ruin on Tweedside,
The creature laid her down and died."—*Border Ballad.*

More than three hundred years have elapsed since the people called Gipsies first made their appearance in this country; and, from all that I have been able to trace concerning them, it seems to have been about the same period that a number of their tribes or families proceeded northwards, and became dwellers and wanderers on the Borders. Their chief places of resort, and where, during the inclemency of winter, they horded or housed together, were, Kirk Yetholm, Rothbury, Horncliff, Spittal, and Tweedmouth. I believe that there are none of them now in Horncliff, which, on the bringing in of the moor, ceased to be a refuge for them; and there are but few in Spittal. But, in Rothbury and Kirk Yetholm, they still abound, and of late years have increased in Tweedmouth—that is, during the winter season; for they take to the hedges as soon as the primrose appears, and begin their wanderings. The principal names borne by the different tribes in these parts are Faa, Young, Gordon, Bailie, Blyth, Ruthven, and Winter. Their occupations are chiefly as itinerant muggers or potters, horners or "cuttie-spoon" makers, tinkers or smiths and tin-workers, and makers of besoms and foot-basses. They are still, with very few exceptions, a wandering and unlettered race, such as their fathers were when they first entered Britain. At Kirk Yetholm, however—which is their seat of royalty on the Borders, and where they have a lease of the houses in what is called Tinkler Row, for nineteen times nineteen years, on payment of a quit rent—they have not been so neglectful of the education of their children as in other parts of the country.

At the period of their first appearance in this kingdom, the land was overrun with thieves and vagabonds, who, in the severe and sanguinary laws of Queen Elizabeth and her father Harry, were described as "*loyterers*" and "*sturdy beggars;*" and it is more than probable that many of these, finding the mode of life followed by the gipsies congenial to them, associated with or intermarried amongst them, and so became as a part of them; and this may account for many calling themselves gipsies, having European, or, I may say, British features. But the real gipsy there is no mistaking—their dark piercing eyes and Asiatic countenance mark them as distinctly as do the eyes and peculiar features of a Jew. (By the by, I wonder that no searcher after the marvellous has endeavoured to prove them to be a remnant of the lost tribes of Israel.) Like the Jews, they are scattered over the whole earth—like them, they are found in every land; and in every land they remain a distinct people.

Who they are, or whence they came, are questions involved in considerable mystery. Their being called Gipsies or Egyptians in this country, I hold to be a popular error which they themselves propagated. Egypt, from the earliest period, was distinguished above all lands for its soothsayers and diviners; and, as the chief occupation of the wanderers then was (and in many places still is) fortune-telling, they had cunning enough to profess to be Egyptians, or natives of the land wherein was taught the mysteries of rolling away the clouds which conceal fate and futurity. They have neither the language nor the manners of the Egyptians. No reason could be assigned for their leaving the land of the Pharaohs; and, although the gipsies of the present day profess to be Egyptians, they can bring forward no proof in support of the pretension. From all that I have read concerning them, it seems to me to be clearly proved, that they are natives of Hindostan, where they formed a part of the lowest caste of Indians, called Pariars or Suders—a class held in detestation and abhorrence by the other castes. That the gipsy clans have a language peculiar to themselves, and which they frequently speak amongst themselves, is well known. It is not a written language; and they have endeavoured to conceal a knowledge of it from the people amongst whom they dwell. They have called it *gibberish;* and it has been very generally believed to be nothing more than what is usually understood by that term, or that at most it was a sort of *slang,* similar to the phrases used among thieves. This is an error. So far as those who have examined it have been able to ascertain, the secret language spoken by the British gipsies appears to be, with but trifling corruptions, the same as that which is spoken by the Indian caste of Suders in Hindostan.* But a stronger proof that the gipsies scattered over Europe derive their origin from the Suders of India is demonstrated by the facts that the Suders were the only people who professed the art of palmistry—that they, like the gipsies, are a wandering race—that their occupations are almost identically the same, being fortune-tellers, dancers, and wandering musicians—that the smiths amongst them go about exactly in the same manner as the tinkers in this country—that, like the gipsies, their favourite food is that of animals that have died of disease—that, like them, they have no fixed religion—and, like them, they endeavour to conceal their language. And the certainty of their being originally the same people is further strengthened, from the Suders having fled in thousands from India, during the murderous ravages of Timur Beg in 1408, which corresponds with the period of the first appearance of the gipsies in Europe. And that they are not Egyptians is strongly proved by the fact, that there are tribes of them in Egypt, where, as in other countries, they are regarded as *strangers and foreigners.*

* I shall subjoin a few words as specimens, from the comparative glossaries of Grellmann and Richardson—

Gipsy.	*Hindostanee.*	*English.*
Bebee	Beebe	An Aunt
Mutchee	Muchee	Fish
Can	Kan	The Ear
Gur	Ghur	A House
Riah	Rayo	A Lord
Dai	Da'ee	Mother
Mass	Mas	Food
Nack	Nak	The Nose
Loon	Loon	Salt

I may have wearied the patience of the reader with this long and perhaps prosy introduction; but there may be some to whom it will not be uninteresting, as throwing a light on the probable origin of a singular people, of whom Judith the gipsy was one. And now to our story.

One of the chief men amongst the gipsies on the Borders, at the beginning of the last century, was Lussha Fleckie, who was only inferior in authority among the tribes to King Faa, who dwelt at Kirk Yetholm, and boasted of reigning lord over a *free* people. Lussha's avocations, like the avocations of all his brethren, were mere apologies for idleness. He was one day a tinker, on another a grinder, and on a third a wandering piper. He was a man of great stature and uncommon strength, and renowned for his exploits as a fisher and a sportsman.

The name of his wife was Mariam, and they had a daughter called Judith, who, as she grew up towards womanhood, became known throughout Roxburgh and Northumberland as the Gipsy Beauty—or the Beautiful Gipsy. The appellation was not unmeritedly bestowed; for, though her skin was slightly tinged with the tawny hue of her race, a soul seemed to glow through her regular and lovely features, and the lustre of her dark eyes to throw a radiance over them. She was tall, and her figure was perfect as her face—it was symmetrical and commanding. Yet she was at once conscious of her beauty and vain of it, and her parents administered to her vanity. They had her fingers adorned with trinkets, her neck with bugles; for Lussha Fleckie, like most of his race, was fond of gold and silver ornaments; and, amongst others, he had in his possession a silver urn, which had been handed down to him through generations, and in which his fathers, as he now did, had deposited the fruits of their spoils and plunder, until it was filled with rich coins as a miser's coffer. He therefore, although a vagrant, was not a poor man, and could afford to deck the charms of his daughter. Judith was early initiated by her mother into the mysteries of the sibyline leaves—her education indeed extended no farther; and, at the age of fifteen, she was an adept in the art of palmistry. The proudest ladies in broad Northumberland or fair Roxburghshire, eagerly submitted their hands to the inspection of the beautiful fortune-teller. The searching brightness of her dark eyes seemed to give a prophetic reality to her words; and, as she caused them to kindle with apparent joy or become transfixed at the discovery of coming wo, her fair and high-born patrons have trembled before her, and inquired—"What is it, Judith?" And, being a favourite with them all, for they both loved and feared her, her person was bedecked with their cast-off garments.

It was early in summer when about forty of the Faa people encamped near the foot of the Eildon hills. A few minutes served for the erection of their portable village in a secure and sheltered situation, and speedily, supported on pieces of crossed branches, the caldrons swung over the crackling fires, each of which blazed fierce and merrily from between two stones. Savoury exhalations impregnated the air, and gave token of a feast. The banquet being spread upon the sward, when it was finished, and the brandy cup had been sent round, Lussha Fleckie took up his Northumbrian pipes and began to play a merry reel. Old and young, men, women, and children, started to their feet, and joyous

"Tripped the light fantastic toe."

Judith glided through the midst of them, with her bright waving tresses falling on her shoulders, as queen of the glad scene. Of her it might have been said—

> "A foot more light, a step more true,
> Never from heath-flower dashed the dew;
> Even the light harebell raised its head,
> Elastic from her airy tread!"

Her partner in the dance was Gemmel Græme; and in his veins also flowed gipsy blood. Gemmel was now a youth of twenty, and one of the most daring of his race. A passionate enthusiasm marked his disposition. In agile sports and feats of strength he had no competitor. In these he was what Lussha Fleckie had been. He boasted of his independence, and that he had never placed a finger on the property of friend or neighbour, nor been detected in levying his exactions on a stranger or a foe. His merits were acknowledged by all the tribes on the Borders; and, though he was not of the royal family of Faas, many looked to him as heir-apparent to the sovereignty. He held in princely contempt all trades, professions, and callings, and thought it beneath the dignity of a "lord of creation" to follow them. When, therefore, he accompanied the tribes in their migrations from place to place, he did not, as was the habit of others, assume the occupation of either tinker, grinder, bass-manufacturer, or the profession of a musician—but he went forth with his gun and his hound, or his leister and net, and every preserve, plantation, and river supplied him with food, and the barns of strangers with bread.

Judith was two years younger than Gemmel Græme, and he had not looked upon her lovely face with indifference; for the stronger passions, and the gentler feelings of the soul, find a habitation in the breast of the wandering gipsy as in those of other men. He had a bold manly bearing, and an expressive countenance. Judith, too, had seen much of his exploits. She had beheld him to the neck in water, struggle with the strong salmon, raise it up, and cast it on the shore. She, too, had witnessed instances of his daring spirit, and in every sport had seen all vanquished who dared to contend with him. Yea, when the scented blossom, like fragrant fleece, overspread the hawthorn hedge-rows, and the primrose and wild voilet flowered at its roots—when the evening star shone glorious in the west, brightening through the deepening twilight—when the viewless cuckoo sighed "good night" to its mate, and the landrail took up its evening cry—then have Judith and Gemmel sat together, by the hedge-side, at a distance from the encampment, with her hand in his. Then he would tell her of the feats he had achieved, of the wrestling matches he had won, or the leaps he had made, and, pressing her hand, add—"But what care I for what I do, or for what others say, when the bright een o' my bonny Judith werena there to reward me wi' a blink o' joy!"

"Ye're a flatterer, Gemmel," whispered she.

"No, bonniest," answered he, "I deny that; I am nae flatterer. But if I were, ye are far beyont flattery sic as mine; and it is nane to say, that to my een ye are bonnier than yon gowden star, that shines by its single sel' in the wide heavens—and to me ye are dearer than the mountain is to the wild deer, or the green leaves to the singing birds."

Then he would press his lips to hers, and she blushed but upbraided him not. But, in the character of Judith, as in that of every woman over whose bosom vanity waveth its butterfly wings, there was something of the coquette. She did not at all times meet the affections of Gemmel with mutual tenderness, though she loved him beyond any one else, and was proud to see him wear her yoke. She had often smiled upon others, while her eyes glanced cold as illuminated ice upon him. Yet never was there one on whom she so smiled that repented not having courted or obtained it. For, as Gemmel's hand was strong and his love passionate, so was his jealousy keen and his revenge insatiate. There were cripples in the tribe, who owed their lameness to the hand of Gemmel, because, in some instance, Judith had shewn a capricious preference to them while she slighted him.

Now, as has been said, it was a day of feasting and rejoicing amongst them, and Judith was Gemmel's partner in the dance. Walter, the young heir of Riccon, was riding round the Eildons, with his grey goshawk upon his arm, and his servant followed him; and hearing sounds of music and shouts of revelry, he turned in the direction from whence they proceeded. He drew up his horse within a few yards

of the merry group, and, from the first glance, the striking figure and the more striking features of Judith arrested his attention. His eyes followed her through the winding mazes of the dance. They sought to meet hers. Gemmel Græme observed him, and a scowl gathered on his brow. When the dance was ended, he led Judith to a green hillock on which her father sat, and approaching the heir of Riccon, inquired fiercely—"What want ye, sir?—what look ye at?"

"Troth, friend," replied Walter, the Master of Riccon, who was of too courageous a temperament to be awed by the face or frown of any man, "I look at yer bonny partner, and I want to speak to her, for a lovelier face or a gentler figure my een haena looked on since my mother bore me."

"Sir," retorted Gemmel more fiercely, "ye hae yer grey goshawk, yer horses, and yer servant, I dinna covet them, and dinna ye covet what is mine, and to me mair precious. Away the road ye cam, or ony road you like, but remain not here. Your company isna desired. Is it the manners o' you gentry to break in where ye are uninvited? Again, I warn ye, *while the earth is green,* to turn your horse's head away! I, Gemmel Græme, wha never vowed revenge but I satisfied it, warn ye!"

"As well," replied young Walter haughtily, "might you vend your threats upon the rocks that compose those cloven mountains, as waste them upon me. I shall speak wi' your bonny partner." And he struck his spurs into his horse to proceed towards her.

Gemmel grasped the bridal, and in a moment horse and rider were upon the ground.

"Gemmel Græme!" shouted Lussha Fleckie, "is that the welcome ye gie to strangers? Foul fa ye! ye passionate tyke!—tak yer hands aff the gentleman, and if he wishes to join in oor merriment he's welcome. Gae, Judith, bring forward the gentle stranger."

Gemmel withdrew his hand from young Walter's throat; and, as he did so, he uttered wild and bitter words, and flung himself, as if in carelessness, on the ground, his head resting on his hand.

Judith, at her father's bidding, went and conducted the heir of Riccon to where her father sat and the late dancers were assembled, and Gemmel was left alone. A brief conversation passed between Lussha and Walter, during which the latter failed not to express his admiration of Judith. Her father smiled—there was a look of triumph in the eyes of her mother. The pipes again struck up, the dance was resumed, and Walter, the heir of Riccon, was the partner of Judith; while Gemmel Græme lay upon the ground gazing upon them and gnashing his teeth.

"We maun see that nae harm come to the young Riccon oot o' this," whispered some of the eldest of the tribe to each other, who had not again joined in the dance, "for Gemmel is kicking his heel upon the ground, an' whistlin' to himsel', and the horse-shoe is on his brow. It was wrong in Lussha to provoke him. There is an ill drink brewing for the young laird. He is dancing owre gunpoother where the touch-fire is creeping to it."

The dance was ended, and young Walter, taking a costly ring from his finger, placed it on Judith's, and whispered—"Wear it for my sake." And her cheeks seemed more lovely as she blushed, smiled, and accepted the gift.

Gemmel started to his feet as he beheld this. But Walter dashed his spurs into his horse, and, riding away, in a few minutes was out of sight. Gemmel glanced upbraidingly on Judith, and he passed by her parents in sullenness and in silence.

But the heir of Riccon had not ridden far, when he turned round and said to his servant—"We go now to Melrose, and from thence ye shall go back and watch the movements o' the party we have seen. Mark ye weel the maiden wi' whom I danced and whose marrow ye never saw: for rather would I that she was lady o' Riccon Ha', than that I shouldna meet her again."

Shortly after the departure of Walter, some of the tribe, perceiving that what had passed between him and Judith was likely to lead to a quarrel between Lussha Fleckie and Gemmel Græme, and knowing, from the nature of both, that such a quarrel would be deadly in its results, proposed that the festivities should terminate, and the encampment break up. The proposal was carried by a majority of voices; and even Lussha, though conscious of the reason why it was made, knew so well the fiery and desperate nature of him who was regarded by the tribe as the future husband of his daughter, that he brooked his own temper and agreed to it. And, while they began to move their tents, and to load their asses and their ponies, Gemmel stood whistling moodily, leaning against a tree, his eyes ever and anon directed with an inquisitive scowl towards the tent of Judith's father, his arms folded on his breast, and at intervals stamping his foot upon the ground; while his favourite hound looked in his face, howled, and shook its tail impatiently, as though it knew that there was work for it at hand.

Early on the following day, the servant of the heir of Riccon returned, and brought him tidings that the encampment had broken up, and Judith and her father had erected their tent in the neighbourhood of Kelso; for, as the ballad upon the subject hath it—

> "Often by Tweed they sauntered down
> As far as pleasant Kelso town."

Walter mounted his horse, and arrived within sight of their tent before the sun had gone down. At a distance from it he perceived Judith. She was alone, and holding her hand towards the declining sun, gazing upon her fingers as if admiring the ring he had presented to her on the previous day. He rode to where she stood. She seemed so entranced that she perceived not his approach. She was indeed admiring the ring. Yet let not her sex blame her too harshly: men and women have all their foibles—this was one of Judith's; and she was a beautiful but ignorant girl of eighteen, whose mind had never been nurtured, and whose heart had been left to itself, to be swayed by every passion. He dismounted—he threw himself on his knees before her—he grasped her hand—"Loveliest of women!" he began—— But I will not follow him through his rhapsody. Such speeches can be spoken but at one period of our lives, and they are interesting only to those to whom they are addressed: therefore, I will spare my readers its recital. But it made an impression on the heart of Judith. He spoke not of *his* feats of strength, of his running, leaping, and wrestling, as Gemmel did; but he spoke of *her*, and in strains new but pleasant to her ear. And, although she had chided her first lover as a flatterer, she did not so chide the heir of Riccon. Vanity kindled at his words, and even while he knelt and spoke before her, she forgot Gemmel, and already fancied herself the jewelled lady of Riccon Hall.

He perceived the effect which his first gift had produced, and he saw also how earnestly she listened to his words. He wore a golden repeater, which he had purchased in Geneva, and which was secured by a chain of the same metal, that went round his neck. He placed the chain around her neck, he pressed the watch upon her bosom. In her bosom she heard, she felt it beat, while her own heart beat more rapidly.

"Hark!—hark!" said he, "how constantly it beats upon your breast—yet, trust me, loved one, my heart beats more truly for you."

Before they parted, another assignation was arranged. From that period, frequent interviews took place between Walter and the lovely Judith, and at each visit he brought her presents, and adorned her person with ornaments. Her parents knew of his addresses, but they forbade them not

Now, one evening they had taken up their abode in a deserted building near to Twisel bridge; and thither the young laird came to visit Judith. Her father invited him into what had once been an apartment in the ruined building, and requested him to sup with them. Walter consented; for the love he bore to Judith could render the coarsest morsel sweet. But, when he beheld the meat that was to be prepared and placed before him, his heart sickened and revolted, for it consisted of part of a sheep that had died; and, when Lussha beheld this, he said—"Wherefore shudder ye, young man, and why is your heart sick? Think ye not that the flesh o' the brute which has been slain by the hand o' its Creator, is fitter for man to eat than the flesh o' an animal which man has butchered?"*

Walter had not time to reply; for, as Lussha finished speaking, a dog bounded into the ruins amongst them. Judith started from the ground, she raised her hands, her eyes flashed with horror.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, in a voice of suppressed agony, "it is Gemmel's—Gemmel's hound! Fly, Walter, fly!"

"Wherefore should I fly?" returned the youth; "think ye, Judith, I am not able to defend myself and you against any man?—Let this fierce braggart come."

"Away!—haste ye away, sir!" said Lussha earnestly, grasping him by the arm, "or there will be blood and dead bodies on this floor! Come away! Gemmel Græme is at hand, and ye dinna ken him sae weel as I do!"

Walter would have remonstrated, but the gipsy, still grasping him by the arm, dragged him to a door of the ruin, adding—"Steal away—quick! quick among the trees, and keep down by the Till to Tweedside. Dinna speak!—away!"

It was a grey midnight in July, and the heir of Riccon had not been absent three minutes, when Gemmel Græme stalked into the ruin, and with his arms folded sat down upon a stone in sullen silence.

"We are glad to see ye, Gemmel," said Mariam; "ye hae been an unco stranger."

"Humph!" was his brief and cold reply.

The supper was spread upon the ground, and the mother of Judith again added—"Come, Gemmel, lad, it is o' nae use to be in a cankered humour for ever. Draw forward and help yersel'—ye see there is nae want."

"So I see!" replied he, sarcastically; "did ye expect company? I doubt yer fare would hardly be to *his* palate!"

"What do you mean, Gemmel?" cried Lussha; "think ye that we are to put up wi' yer fits?—or wherefore, if ye hae naething to say, come ye glunching here, wi' a brow as dark and threatening as a nicht in December?"

Gemmel rose angrily and replied—"I hae something to say, Lussha, and that something is to Judith, but not in your presence. Judith, will ye speak wi' me?" added he, addressing her.

Judith, who had sat in a corner of the ruin, with her hands upon her bosom, covering the watch which young Walter had given her, and forgetting that the golden chain by which it was suspended from her neck was visible, cast a timid glance towards her father, as if imploring his protection.

"I am no sure, Gemmel," said Lussha, "whether I can trust my daughter in yer company or no. If I do, will ye gie me yer thumb that ye winna harm her, nor raise your hand against her."

"Harm her!"—exclaimed Gemmel, disdainfully—"I scorn it!—there's my thumb."

"Ye may gang, Judith," said her father.

Judith, with fear and guilt graven on her lovely features, rose and accompanied Gemmel. He walked in silence by her side until they came to an old and broad-branched tree, which stood about forty yards from the ruin. A waning summer moon had risen since he arrived, and mingled its light with the grey gloam of the night, revealing the ornaments which Judith wore.

"Judith," said Gemmel, breaking the silence, and raising her hand from her bosom, with which she concealed the watch, "where got ye thae braw ornaments! Has yer faither found a heart to lay his fingers on the treasures in the silver jug?"

She trembled and remained silent.

"Poor thing! poor thing!—lost Judith!" exclaimed Gemmel, "I see how it is. For the sake o' thae vile gewgaws ye hae deserted me—ye hae sacrificed peace o' mind, and bidden fareweel to happiness! O Judith, woman!—wha is the flatterer noo? Do you mind syne we sat by the hedge-side thegither, when the corn-craik counted the moments round about us, and tried to mind us hoo they flew—when the sun had sunk down in the west, and the bonny hawthorn showered its fragrance owre us, as though we sat in the garden where our first parents were happy? Do you mind o' thae days, Judith?—and hoo, when my heaving bosom beat upon yours, as we sat locked in ilka others arms, I asked, 'Will ye be mine?' and ye let yer head fa' on my shouther, and said '*I will!*'—Judith! do ye mind o' thae things, and where are they noo?"

"Gemmel Graeme," replied she, and she wept as she spoke, "let me gang—I canna bide wi' ye—and ye hae nae richt to put yer questions to me."

"Nae right!" he returned—"O Judith! hae ye forgotten a' yer vows?—or hae ye forgotten the time when, in caulder nichts than this, when the snaw was on the ground, and the trees were bare o' leaves, that ye hae stood or wandered wi' me, frae the time that the sun gaed down, until the sea-birds and the craws sailed owre oor heads seeking for their food on the next morning?—and now ye tell me ye canna bide wi' me? O Judith! ye hae dune what has made my heart miserable, and what will mak yer ain as miserable!" And as he spoke he still held her hand.

"Let me gang, Gemmel," she again sobbed, and struggled to wrest her hand from his grasp—"I hae naething to say to ye."

"Then ye will leave me, Judith!" he cried, wildly—"leave me for ever, wi' a withered heart and a maddened brain!" She answered him not, but still wept and struggled the more to escape from him.

"Then, gang, Judith!" he cried, and flung her hand from him, "but beware hoo we meet again!"

Some months after this, and when the harvest-moon shone full on the fields of golden grain, and the leaves rustled dry and embrowned upon the trees, there was a sound of voices in a wood which overhung the Tweed near Coldstream. They were the voices of Walter the heir of Riccon and of Judith.

"Leave," said he, "dear Judith, leave this wandering life, and come wi' me, and ye shall be clad in silks, dearest, hae servants to wait on ye, and a carriage to ride in?"

"Ah!" she sighed, "but a wandering life is a pleasant life; and, if I were to gang wi' ye, would ye aye be kind to me, and love me as you do now?"

"Can ye be sae cruel as doubt me, Judith?" was his reply.

"Weel," returned she, "it was for yer sake that I left Gemmel Graeme, wha is a bald and a leal lad, and one that I once thought I liked weel. Now, I dinna understand about your priests and your books, but will ye come before my faither and my mother, and the rest o' oor folk, and before them swear that I am yer lawfu' wife, the only lady o' Riccon Ha', and I will gang wi' ye?"

"My own Judith, I will!" replied Walter, earnestly.

"You will not!" exclaimed a loud and wild voice, "unless over the dead body of Gemmel Græme!"

* Gipsies always assign this as a reason for their preferring the flesh of animals that have died, to that of such as are slaughtered.



JUDITH THE EGYPTIAN.

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At the same moment a pistol flashed within a few yards of where they stood, and Walter the heir of Riccon fell with a groan at the feet of Judith. Her screams rang through the woods, startling the slumbering birds from the branches, and causing them to fly to and fro in confusion. Gemmel sprang forward, and grasped her hand—"Now, fause ane," he cried, "kiss the lips o' yer bonny bridegroom!—catch his spirit as it leaves him! Hang roond his neck and haud him to yer heart till his corpse be cauld! Noo, he canna hae ye, and I winna!—fareweel!—fareweel!—fause, treacherous Judith!"

Thus saying, and striking his forehead, and uttering a loud and bitter scream, he rushed away.

Judith sank down by the dead body of Walter, and her tears fell upon his face. Her cries reached the encampment where her parents and others of her race were. They hastened to the wood from whence her cries proceeded, and found her stretched upon the ground, her arms encircling the neck of the dead. They raised her in their arms and tried to soothe her, but she screamed the more wildly, and seemed as one whose senses grief has bewildered.

"Judith," said her father, "speak to me, bairn—wha has done this? Was it"——

"Gemmel!—wicked Gemmel!" she cried; and in the same breath added, "No! no!—it wasna him! It was me! —it was me! It was fause Judith."

Gemmel Græme, however, had dropped his pistol on the ground when he beheld his victim fall, and one of the party taking it up, they knew him to be the murderer. Lussha Fleckie, touched by his daughter's grief, and disappointed by his dream of vain ambition being broken, caused each of his party to take a vow that they would search for Gemmel Græme, and whosoever found him should take blood for blood upon his head.

And they did search, but vainly, for Gemmel was no more heard of.

Twelve months passed, and autumn had come again. A young maniac mother, with a child at her breast, and dressed as a gipsy, endeavoured to cross the Tweed between Norham and Ladykirk. The waters rose suddenly, and as they rose she held her infant closer to her bosom, and sang to it; but the angry flood bore away the maniac mother and her babe. She was rescued and restored to life, though not to reason, but the child was seen no more.

For thirty years the poor maniac continued at intervals to visit the fatal spot, wandering by the river, stretching out her arms, calling on her child, saying—"Come to me—come to yer mother, my bonny bairn, for ye are heir o' Riccon, and why should I gang shoeless amang snaw! Come to me—it was cruel Gemmel Græme that murdered your bonny faither—it wasna me!"

It was in January the body of a grey-haired woman, covered with a tattered red cloak, was found frozen and dead, below Norham Castle. It was the poor maniac Judith, the once beautiful gipsy. Some years afterwards, an old soldier, who had been in foreign wars, came to reside in the neighbourhood, and on his deathbed requested that he should be buried by the side of Judith, and the letters G. G. carved on a stone over his grave.

THE DESERTED WIFE

The following tale was communicated to me when in Dumfriesshire, in the year 1827, by an old and respectable lady, who was herself the subject of it. It interested me then, and I shall endeavour to tell it to my readers as she told it to me. But, as she may be still living, I shall change the name, though I then had her permission to publish it, and, to use her own words, "to write a Tale about it if I pleased." I shall therefore speak of her as Mrs Isabella Simpson.

My faither she began, was weel to do in the world. He had a farm that bordered on the Nith, between Dumfries and Sanquhar. The laird and him had been companions frae they were bits o' laddies, and he had a guid bargain o't, and made a hantle o' siller. He was rather a purse-proud man, but a kind faither in the main, for a' that. My mother was a woman among ten thousand—ye might hae searched ten parishes and not found her equal—my faither allowed that; and he had a right to ken, for she was his wife thirty years. She was the best tempered woman that I've ever met wi' in my born days; and, without having the least particle o' meanness about her, she was as thrifty as she was good-tempered. She had also been a particularly weelfaured woman. An aulder brother and mysel were the only bairns that they had living, and we were accordingly a good deal made o', especially by our mother. It was generally believed that I would bring a fortune to the man that got me; and when I grew up to woman's estate, there were a number o' young lads that professed to be very fond o' me; but for my part I had no liking for ony o' them save one, and that was Peter Simpson. He was a blate lad, and I didna ken that he was fond o' me frae himsel; but my acquaintances used to jeer me about him, and say, "Isabella, if ye dinna tak pity on puir Peter Simpson, the lad will do some ill to himsel'. He is fairly owre head and ears aboot ye."

"Hoots!" said I, "nane o' yer havers—the ne'er a fears o' him. The lad never spoke to me in his life."

And sure enough, as I have tauld ye, he never had. But I used to remark his confusion when he passed me, as he half looked at me, and half turned away his head, and I'm sure I was as confused as he was; and it was a'thegither on account o' our acquaintances jeering me about him. At the kirk, too, on the Sabbath, I often used to observe his een fixed on me; and when he perceived that I saw him, he would turn away his head, and his cheeks, his very brow, grew as red as the morocco on the back of the laird and his lady's bibles.

Peter's faither was a farmer like my own, and we were on an equality in that respect; but he had taken a fancy to be a millwright, and was serving his time for that business in Dumfries. Now, there was one day that I had been in the town, making some bits o' bargains at the shops for my mother; but, just as I was completing them, a terrible storm came away; it rained a perfect down-pour—such a spate as I never saw. Umbrellas had hardly been seen in the country at that time, and it wasna one in five hundred that had a one. I had no acquaintances in Dumfries, and I was forced to stop in the shop. But I remained from four in the afternoon until seven at night, and it rained as fast as ever—it was never like to fair. It was beginning to set down for dark, I was feared to gang hame at night, by mysel, and I saw it was o' no use stopping ony langer—so I left the shop; but, before I had got three yards from the door, who should come bang against me, as he ran wi' his head down for the rain, but Peter Simpson!"

"Oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Isabella," said he, when he saw who I was; and he looked very confused.

"There is nae harm done," said I.

"Ye haena to gang hame in sic a nicht as this?" said he.

"Indeed hae I," said I.

"Then," said he, "if ye'll just step into the shop there for a minute, I think I ken where I could borrow ye an umbrella."

I thought it was remarkably kind o' him, and I gaed back to the shop again. He hadna been away a handel-awhile, when in a very jiffy he came running back wi' an umbrella in his hand I went to the door as soon as I saw him, and he lifted up the umbrella owre my head and held out his oxter to me. I canna tell what my feelings were at the moment. I forgot that it was a down-pour o' rain and every thing else, and I wonder that I didna lose my mother's

bundle frae under my arm. But I took his oxter, and wi' the umbrella owre our heads we gaed linking awa thegither —and, between you and me, I was glad o' his company for more reasons than one.

I never had any idea before that umbrellas could be such comfortable things. It made it as pleasant owre our heads as if the sun had been shining on us. Under foot it wasna just so agreeable, for the water was running across the roads in many places just like rivers, and I had either to wade knee-deep or to allow Peter to take me up in his arm and carry me through, which he did; though I was very greatly put about before I could think o' allowing him to do it.

But I got home, and when we reached the door, Peter was sae backward that he held out his hand to bid me "good-night," without gaun into the house wi' me.

"Oh," says I, "ye maunna gang away yet—for when my mother hears o' yer kindness, if she kenned that I had let ye gang back at the door without askin ye in, she would be very angry."

So I got him prevailed upon to gang in wi' me, and when I tauld my mother how attentive he had been, and how he had borrowed the umbrella, and accompanied me a' the way, she didna ken where to set him. There was naething in the house that she thought owre good for him. She got him to put off his coat, and his shoon and his stockings, and gied him things o' my brother's to put on. My faither wasna at hame, I remember—I think he was in about Edinburgh at the time. My mother pressed Peter to stop and take his supper wi' us; and he did stop, and began to gather more courage, and to get the use o' his tongue. The supper was laid out, and a hearty meal he made, and glad was I to see him eat sae freely. After supper, my mother brought out the bottle and gied him a dram, and Peter drank baith our very good healths.

Just as he was on his feet to gang away, my mother had to turn her back for a minute, and says he to me, while he keepit turning his hat round about in his hand—"Guid nicht, Isabella—when may I come back again?"

"Hoots!" said I, without meaning the slightest harm, and not for a moment intending to forbid him to come back. He hung down his head, and with a sort o' seigh, gaed away without saying ony mair. But night after night came, an' week after week, an' I saw nae mair o' Peter Simpson; he hadna courage to venture back again, although it was not my intention to discourage him by saying—"Hoots!"

About three months after this, my mother was suddenly cut off frae among us and called to her account. I was naturally appointed housekeeper in her place. Now, we had a windmill on the farm, and the mill was out o' repair, and the millwrights were to come frae Dumfries to put it to rights, and till their job was finished they were to get their meat in the house. I wished that Peter might be one o' them, and he was one o' them. Our acquaintance was renewed. Peter's shyness gradually wore away, and I daresay that, for a year and a half, for five nights out o' the seven, he came regularly to see me. We were very happy. I liked him, and he liked me. But his faither sent him to the south for a year or two, to some great men they ca'ed Mr Bolton and Mr Watt, to get a thorough insight into his business before he set him up for himsel. Hech me! what insight he got about wheels, and mills, or machines, I canna tell ye; but he got an unco insight into wickedness.

During his absence, my faither had married a second wife, which I considered as very disrespectful to the memory o' my mother, and I was very ill about it I was loath to gie up the keys o' the house to a stranger that wasna meikle aulder than mysel, and to gie up my situation as housekeeper. I didna like to submit to her; but my faither said that I should submit or leave the house—and what could I do? But I wearied for Peter to come back, and, were it for no other reason, just that I might hae a house o' my ain, where I might hae the liberty o' doing what I liked without being quarrelled.

But Peter did come back, and there was a very great change upon him indeed, though not for the better. He certainly looked a great deal smarter than when he went away, and I didna ken where he had left his former blateness; but he brought none o' it back wi' him. His language was quite Englified; and, amongst other bad practices which he had acquired, I was baith sorry and disgusted to remark that of profane swearing!—which he actually did as though he werna conscious o' what he was saying. O sir! I think there is naething that makes a man look mair degraded and contemptible than this most senseless o' a' sinfu' practices. It is lower than even daily drunkenness. I ken naething sae bad. However, I must say for him, there seemed no abatement in his affections for me: and I resolved that, as soon as we were married, I would cure him o' the bad practices he had acquired.

To my sorrow and surprise, however, ye might as weel hae taken an adder by the beard as spoken to my faither o' our marriage. He set himself tooth and nail against it.

"Na, na!" said he; "if I were to allow ye to throw yersel awa upon that young, graceless birkie, he would squander away the thousand pounds that ye hae for a portion, and break your heart into the bargain within a twalmonth."

It was in vain that I grat before my faither and tried to reason wi' him. I might as weel hae let my tears fall on a neither millstone wi' the hope o' softening it. Peter vowed, however, that he no' cared a snap o' his fingers for neither my faither nor the fortune he had to gie me—that it was me he wanted, and me he would hae. The short and the long o' the story is, that, finding there was nothing to be made o' my faither, and that he wadna come to, Peter got me to consent to elope wi' him. My conscience tauld me that I was doing a daft-like action, and a thing I wad maybe rue. But Peter, according to an agreement between us, came to my bedroom window, which after some hesitation, when I saw his frenzy and impatience, I opened, and he threw up to me the queerest sort o' ladder I ever saw. It was just bits o' sma' rope tied thegither, wi' twa cleeks at the one end. I had no sooner done wi' it as he desired me, than up he came, and whispering to me to come out at the window and place my foot on it, I did so, and he taking me under his arm, lighted me safe upon the ground in a moment.

One o' his faither's servants was standing at a distance holding a horse, ready saddled to carry two. I gat on to the pad behint Peter, and he galloped away till we came to the side o' the Solway, and there I found a boat was lying ready to take us across to Workington. Peter took out a license, and that day I became Mrs Simpson. I heard that when my faither learned in the morning that I had run away, he didna offer to come after me, but he shaked his head and said—"Aweel! 'they that will to Cupar maun to Cupar!' Poor infatuated lassie!—sorrow will briiig her to her hunkers, and she will be glad to come back to the house that she has clandestine left; and, come when she like, for her mother's sake, she shall aye find a hame!"

He said this when his wife was not present. I hae often thought that there is something prophetic in a parent's words, especially when they speak concerning the consequences o' disobedience; and in my case I found much o' what my faither said owre true.

Peter, however, had begun business, and he and I set up house. Trade was very guid in the millwright line at that period, for thrashing machines were just getting into vogue, though ignorant folk raised an unco outcry against them. My husband's having been wi' the great men, Mr Bolton and Mr Watt, threw a good deal in his way; and, on the second year after he began business, we had fifteen jour-

neymen constantly employed, besides apprentices. Now, Peter was very clever, and everybody said that he was turning out a "bright fellow." Four years and better passed owre our heads, and I'm sure there wasna a happier woman than me to be met wi' round the whole circumference o' the globe. I had twa bits o' bairns, a laddie and a lassie, and was likely to hae a third. I had got Peter so broken off the evil practices which he learned in the south, and o' which I hae spoken, that he never swore, except when he was in a passion; and, though that was more frequently than I wished —for he was of a fiery temper—yet it never lasted lang, and he was always sorrow for it afterwards. Even my faither heard sae meikle about his behaviour and cleverness, and his affection for me and the bairns, that he called one day at our house, and, after making an apology for being angry at our marriage, he actually paid the thousand pounds that were to be my portion, down upon the nail.

Weel, as I have said, this state o' happiness continued for four years and better; but it didna see the fifth year out. Peter had a job that would take a twalmonth in completing, some way in the neighbourhood o' Durham. All our men, save a journeyman and an apprentice or two, were there, for the work had to be finished by a certain time, and Peter was there himself also. He was only to be hame about once a month; and, for the first eight weeks that he was there, he was very attentive in writing every week, and came thrice across to see me and the bairns. But, on the ninth week we had no letter, on the tenth we had none, and one came on the thirteenth. It was merely three or four lines at most, and instead of beginning it—"*My dear Isabella,*" as all his former letters began, (and long letters they were,) he merely said, "*Dear Wife,*" and informed me that he was weel, that he hoped I would study economy in everything in his absence, and gie his love to the bairns, and that it was impossible for him to say when he would be across to see us again. I was dumfoundered—I read the letter again and again, and as I read the tears fell down my cheeks. "What," thought I, "can hae possessed Peter!"

It was ten weeks before I again saw his face; and when he did come, he was as dour and as ill-natured as if I had been his enemy instead o' the wife o' his bosom, and he hadna even a pleasant look or a pleasant word to gie to the bairns.

"O Peter!" says I, "what's the matter wi' ye—what has happened? Will ye no tell me, yer ain wife, that wishes nae mair than to share wi' you whether it be joy or sorrow! Is the job likely to be a loss to ye—or what?"

"Haud your tongue, ye silly woman, ye!" said he—"why do ye trouble me wi' your nonsense?"

"O Peter!" said I, "this behaviour o' yours is distressing me beyont measure. Will ye no tell me what is the cause o't, or if I can do onything to mak ye happier?"

"Get oot o' my sicht!" cried he; "I tell ye get out o' my sicht!—and if onything will mak me happier that will!"

My heart was ready to burst; my poor bosom heaved like a bird's that has been pursued by a hawk, till it falls upon the ground. I sank down upon the chair, and I was only able to cry to our auldest bairn—"O hinny, bring me a drink o' water!" And the words were hardly out o' my lips when I swooned clean away.

I had an infant o' nine weeks auld at my breast at the time; but Peter shewed nae regard for either the bit tender lammie or its mother. He went out o' the house, driving the doors behint him, and that very night set out for Durham again. I thought the change in his conduct would be my death, and I tried in vain to imagine what could be the reason o' it. It laid me bedfast for a fortnight, and the poor infant at my bosom began to dwine through the effects o' my illness.

Ten miserable and anxious weeks passed, and Peter neither came to see us, nor wrote, nor sent us siller for our support. I was tempted to mention the circumstances to my faither, and to ask his advice; but I thought again that it might be making bad worse, and that it was best for me as a wife and mother to keep my sorrows to mysel, without making them a world's talk. So I buried my misery and anxiety in my own heart, and no one knew of it from me, save from the unco change that had been wrought on my appearance. But my heart was for ever sick, and my bit infant, through the effect o' my misery, died in my arms.

I got word sent to Peter, but he didna come to assist or comfort me in my distress, until within half an hour o' the time set for lifting the corpse. When I saw him enter the house, I wrung my hands, and cried "O Peter!" and got up to meet him—to throw my head upon his breast—for I thought it might still find comfort there; but he said coldly—"Compose yourself!" And without even coming forward to meet me or to shake hands wi' me, he took a chair and sat down. His manner, his cauld words, went like an arrow through my miserable bosom. I wished to be wi' my dead infant, and I sank back upon a seat and sobbed aloud.

When the funeral was owre, and the folk had left the house, he got up and said—"I haena time to stop. The work must be got forward, and the men can do nothing till I am wi' them again in the morning. Therefore I maun bid ye good-day."

"O Peter! Peter!" cried I, "will ye leave me in the midst o' my affliction! what hae I dune, dear, that ye should be sae changed to me? There was a time when ye wadna used me in this way. Only let me ken my fault, and there is naething in this wide world that I winna do to mend it."

"Ye talk as a fool, woman!" said he.

"No, Peter," I answered, "I dinna talk as a fool; but I talk as a heart-broken wife and a mourning mother. Weel do ye ken that I would lay the hair o' my head beneath your feet to serve ye; and there was a time when ye would hae done as meikle for me. But it's no the case wi' ye now—and, O Peter!—what—what is the reason? What hae I dune to offend ye?"

"Are ye dementit, Bella, or what is the matter wi' ye?" said he, crossly; "I tell ye I am bound to get the work forward—it will be at a stand if I stop here. Therefore, I hae nae time to be tormented wi' yer nonsense, and so—good day!"

"Peter!—husband!" I cried, and flung my arms round his neck—"do you mean to kill me outright? Oh! by the love ye once bore me, and by the vows ye made, dinna drive me from your breast as if I were a serpent. I am the mother o' yer bairns, Peter—her that ye used to say was dearer to ye than your own existence—and how can ye treat me sae now?" He kissed my cheek, and for a moment I thought I saw tears in his een. But he shook me by the hand, and saying, "I canna stop," broke away frae me, and left me to my misery.

A thousand hopes and suspicions now began so rise up in my mind and torment me. I was the most unhappy woman under the sun. Yet I couldna bring mysel to believe ill o' Peter. I never saw his face again until the job was finished, and he very seldom wrote, and only sent a pound note or sae now and then, for the support o' me and the bairns.

When the concern at Durham was finished, he got another in Cheshire, which I heard would be two or three years in completing. The whole o' baith his men and apprentices were there wi' him; and, in a short time, he dropped sending the bit pound note now and then; and it was wi' a sair, sair struggle, that I could get bread for my bairns, or make a decent appearance; and I thought that I would now be compelled to make known a' my sorrows to my faither

But what I had lang dreaded, though I couldna wrang Peter by believing it possible, was revealed to me like a

clap o' thunder. There was a Mrs Montgomery, who was a very particular acquaintance o' mine; and, though I had never hinted a word o' my griefs to her, but tried to look cheerfu' when the canker-worm was eating at my very heart, she saw that I had a secret sorrow in my breast, and that I was pining under neglect. She was in very comfortable circumstances, and she had an only son, and he was an apprentice wi' Peter, and was working wi' him in Cheshire. She had invited the twa bairns and me to spend the afternoon wi' her, and take a dish o' tea. But, just as the lass had brought in the tray, we heard a heavy foot on the stairs, and in came Mrs Montgomery's son, tired-looking, broken down, and foot-sore.

"Johnny!—my bairn!" said his mother, "what's brought ye the noo? Ye haena broken your 'prenticeship!" The bit callant said he had to run away, wi' the ill usage o' his maister and *mistress!*

"*Mistress!* laddie!" I gasped—"what—what do ye mean?"

"I mean to say," quoth the laddie, "that he is a bad man, and has another wife besides you, ma'am, and a family too!"

"O Peter!—cruel Peter!" I cried, and I fell down upon the floor as if I were dead.

It was wi' great difficulty that Mrs Montgomery could restore me to consciousness, or bring me to onything like composure. But she kindly pressed me if there was ony way in which she could serve me, and I borrowed from her a five pound note, and the next morning, before onybody was astir, I locked up the house, and wi' one bairnie in my arms, and the other leading in my hand, I took the Carlisle road to the south, Sometimes we got a cast in a carrier's cart, or went a stage or twa in the coaches that overtook us on the road, but for the most part I walked on foot, carrying my helpless bairns. At length, after a weary journey, we reached Macclesfield, which was the name o' the town where Peter was; and when I was there, I had great difficulty to learn onything concerning him; but at last I inquired at an ironmonger's shop, and I was informed there that he lived about a mile and a half down the river—and I think they ca'ed the river the Bodlin. Sae, wi' my bairnies toddlin' and tired by my side, for I was sae fatigued that I couldna carry them, I gaed away down by the river to seek for him. My laddie, tired as he was, poor thing, hirpled away about a dozen o' yards before me, pulling at the gowans and other flowers, and every now and then crying to me—"O mother, here's a bonny ane!—I'll gie my faither this!—will it be lang or we see him noo?

"No, my dear," said I, "it winna be lang noo." And the ears were hailing down my cheeks as I spoke.

But, as I was saying, my bairn was about a dozen o' yards before me, and he was just turning a sort o' corner, when he cried out—"Mother! mother!—here's my faither coming to meet us!"

My broken heart louped to my mouth. I cried—"O hinny! hinny!—what do you say?" But, as I spoke, I got to the corner, and there, within half a stone throw o' me, did I see Peter—my husband!—wi' a lang yellow hizzy, dressed like a queen, linked to his arm, and a servant wench carrying a bairn behint them!

I saw my laddie running wi' his hands out to meet him, and I heard him crying—"Faither! faither!—here's my mother and my sister!"

But my poor daized head swam round. I could hear, I could see nae mair; and, wi' a scream o' misery, I fell senseless on the green grass. As I began to recover, I felt cauld water pouring on my breast and face, and when I opened my een, it was Peter that did it. Even then, I could hae forgien him a' that was passed, and I tried to rise, and, stretching out my hand to him, said, affectionately, but not upbraidingly—"O Peter!"

"Woman!" said he, and he looked fiercely as an angry lion, and his teeth were grating one upon another, "why hae ye come here to torment and persecute me? Go back to your faither's—go where you like—take your bairns wi ye—I will gie you and them a maintenance; but never let me see your face again."

My poor bairns were screaming round about me, they were kissing me and clinging round my neck. The strength and the presence o' mind wi' which I was then inspired surprises me to this moment. I rose upon my feet, I looked him brent in the face, and his guiltiness made him hang down his head before me.

"Peter," said I, "if I am not worthy o' yer heart, I winna accept o' bread at yer hands. For thir dear bairns that I hae borne, I am ready to beg to the world's end. I will work for them till the nails fa' frae my fingers; but I will die, Peter, and they shall perish for want, before they taste a morsel o' your providing! Fareweel! cruel, ungratefu' man!—and may ye never feel the pangs o' the poor heart that ye hae broken!"

"Villain that I am!" he cried. And striking his clenched hand upon his brow, he left me and my bairns.

Where the hizzy that I saw wi' him, and her servant and bairn, were a' the time, I didna see, and I didna inquire. But not to fatigue you, sir, wi' a lang story—I had husbanded the five pounds that Mrs Montgomery lent me in such a way that I thought I had enough left to carry me back again to Dumfriesshire. We had reached within a mile o' Preston, when wha should we meet upon horseback, but my auld faither coming to look after us! Mrs Montgomery had informed him o' the whole particulars, and he nae sooner heard o' them than he set out to see that nae harm was done to his Isabella. The auld grey-haired man jumped down frae his horse, and grat upon my neck like a bairn. He sent us by the next coach to Carlisle; and he took me and my bairns hame wi' him; and there I found that a good mother was my step-mother to me in my distress, and she was mair than a grandmother to my bairns.

When my son was about eighteen, my father died; and besides the portion that I had got after my marriage, he bequeathed to me in his will what had been an independence.

I had heard nothing about my husband for nearly twenty years. I didna ken whether he was dead or living. But my son took a fancy for the sea; and, before he was twenty-one, he was a ship captain in the American trade. His vessel was lying at New York, when there was a middle-aged broken-down man—one that seemed to be ruined both in health and circumstances—came aboard and begged for the sake o' Heaven that he would gie him a passage to England. My son asked him several questions, and, O sir! sir!—he discovered that the poor beggar before him was his own faither—his thoughtless faither! He didna chide him, he didna upbraid him—for oh, it is a terrible thing for a son to speak like a condemning judge to a faither. I needna tell ye that he brought him hame—that he did everything to restore him to health and happiness—and even brought him as a criminal before me. But I kenned him at the first glance and welcomed him wi' open arms.

"O Isabella! Isabella!" he cried, and fell at my feet.

"Husband! husband!" said I, helping our son to raise him up, "there is joy owre those that repent. Welcome!—welcome!"

He lived for twelve years after this, and he died a sincere penitent, wi' his head upon my bosom, and his hand in my hand, imploring a blessing upon me and his bairns.

WILSONS

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE UNBIDDEN GUEST;
OR,
JEDBURGH'S REGAL FESTIVAL.

"In the mid revels, the first ominous night
Of their espousals, when the room shone bright
With lighted tapers—the king and the queen leading
The curious measures, lords and ladies treading
The self-same strains—the king looks back by chance,
And spies a strange intruder fill the dance;
Namely, a mere anatomy, quite bare,
His naked limbs both without flesh and hair,
(As we decipher Death,) who stalks about
Keeping true measure till the dance be out."

Heywood's Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels.

THERE is no river in this country which presents, in its course, scenes more beautifully romantic than the little Jed. Though it exhibits not the dizzy cliffs where the eagles build their nests, the mass of waters, the magnitude and the boldness, which give the character of sublimity to a scene; yet, as it winds its course through undulating hills where the forest trees entwine their broad branches, or steals along by the foot of the red, rocky precipices, where the wild flowers and the broom blossom from every crevice of their perpendicular sides, and from whose summits the woods bend down, beautiful as rainbows, it presenteth pictures of surpassing loveliness, which the eye delights to dwell upon. It is a fair sight to look down from the tree-clad hills upon the ancient burgh, with the river half circling it, and gardens, orchards, woods, in the beauty of summer blossoming, or the magnificence of their autumnal hues, encompassing it, while the venerable Abbey riseth stately in the midst of all, as a temple in paradise. Such is the character of the scenery around Jedburgh now; and, in former ages, its beauty rendered it a favourite resort of the Scottish Kings.

About the year 1270, an orphan boy, named Patrick Douglas, herded a few sheep upon the hills, which were the property of the monks of Melrose. Some of the brotherhood, discovering him to be a boy of excellent parts, instructed him to read and to write; and perceiving the readiness with which he acquired these arts, they sought also to initiate him into all the learning of the age, and to bring him up for their order. To facilitate and complete his instructions, they had him admitted amongst them, as a *convert* or lay-brother. But, though the talents of the shepherd boy caused him to be regarded as a prodigy by all within the monastery, from the Lord Abbot down to the kitchener and his assistants; yet, with Patrick, as with many others even now, gifts were not graces. He had no desire to wear the white cassock, narrow scapulary, and plain linen hood of the Cistertian brethren; neither did he possess the devoutness necessary for performing his devotions seven times a-day; and, when the bell roused him at two in the morning, to what was called the *nocturnal* service, Patrick arose reluctantly; for, though compelled to wedge himself into a narrow bed at eight o'clock in the evening, it was his wont to lie awake, musing on what he had read or learned, until past midnight; and, when the *nocturnal* was over, he again retired to sleep, until he was aroused at six for *matins;* but, after these, came other devotions, called *tierce,* the *sexte,* the *none, vespers,* and the *compline,* at nine in the morning, at noon, at three in the afternoon, at six in the evening and before eight. These services broke in on his favourite studies; and, possessing more talent than devotion, while engaged in them he thought more of his studies than of them. Patrick, therefore, refused to take the monastic vow. He

——"had heard of war,
And longed to follow to the field some warlike lord."

He, however, was beloved by all; and when he left the monastery, the Abbot and the brethren gave him their benediction, and bestowed gifts upon him. He also carried with him letters from the Lord Abbot and Prior, to men who were mighty in power at the court of King Philip of France.

From the testimonials which he brought with him, Patrick Douglas, the Scottish orphan, speedily obtained favour in the eyes of King Philip and his nobles, and became as distinguished on the field for his prowess and the feats of his arms, as he had been in the Abbey of Melrose for his attainments in learning. But a period of peace came; and he who was but a few years before a shepherd boy by Tweedside, now bearing honours conferred on him by a foreign monarch, was invited as a guest to the palace of the illustrious Count of Dreux. A hundred nobles were there, each exhibiting all the pageantry of the age; and there, too, were a hundred ladies, vying with each other in beauty, and in the splendour of their array. But chief of all was Jolande, the daughter of their host, the Count of Dreux, and the fame of whose charms had spread throughout Christendom. Troubadours sang of her beauty, and princes bent the knee before her. Patrick Douglas beheld her charms. He gazed on them with a mixed feeling of awe, of regret, and of admiration. His eyes followed her, and his soul followed them He beheld the devoirs which the great and the noble paid to her, and his heart was heavy; for she was the fairest and the proudest flower among the French nobility—he an exotic weed of desert birth. And, while princes strove for her hand, he remembered, he felt, that he was an orphan of foreign and of obscure parentage—a scholar by accident, (but to be a scholar was no recommendation in those days, and it is but seldom that it is one even now,) and a soldier of fortune, to whose name royal honours were not attached, while his purse was light, and who, because his feet covered more ground than he could call his own, his heels were denied the insignia of knighthood. Yet, while he ventured not to breathe his thoughts or wishes before her, he imagined that she looked on him more kindly, and that she smiled on him more frequently than on his lordly rivals; and his heart deceived itself, and rejoiced in secret.

Now, it was early in the year 1283, the evening was balmy for the season, the first spring flowers were budding forth, and the moon, as a silver crescent, was seen among the stars. The young scholar and soldier of unknown birth walked in the gardens of the Count of Dreux, and the lovely Jolande leaned upon his arm. His heart throbbed as he listened to the silver tones of her sweet voice, and felt the gentle pressure of her soft hand in his. He forgot that she was the daughter of a prince—he the son of a dead peasant. In the delirium of a moment, he had thrown himself on his knee before her, he had pressed her hand on his bosom, and gazed eagerly in her face.

She was startled by his manner, and had only said—'Sir! what means?"——though in a tone neither of reproach

nor of pride, when what she would have said was cut short by the sudden approach of a page, who, bowing before her, stated that four commissioners having arrived from the King of Scotland, the presence of the Princess Jolande was required at the palace. Patrick Douglas started to his feet as he heard the page approach, and as he listened to his words he trembled.

The princess blushed, and turning from Patrick, proceeded in confusion towards the palace; while he followed at a distance, repenting of what he had said, and of what he had done, or, rather, wishing that he had said more, or said less.

"Yet," thought he, "she did not look on me as if I had spoken presumptuously! I will hope, though it be against hope—even though it be but the shadow of despair."

But an hour had not passed, although he sought to hide himself with his thoughts in his chamber, when he heard that the commissioners who had arrived from his native land, were Thomas Charteris, the High Chancellor; Patrick de Graham, William de St Clair, and John de Soulis; and that their errand was to demand the beautiful Jolande as the bride and queen of their liege sovereign, Alexander the Third, yet called good.

Now, the praise of Alexander was echoed in every land. He was as a father to his people, and as a husband to his kingdom. He was wise, just, resolute, merciful. Scotland loved him—all nations honoured him. But Death, that spareth not the prince more than the peasant, and which, to short-sighted mortals, seemeth to strike alike at the righteous and the wicked, had made desolate the hearths of his palaces, and rendered their chambers solitary. Tribulation had fallen heavily on the head of a virtuous King. A granddaughter, the infant child of a foreign prince, was all that was left of his race; and his people desired that he should leave behind him, as inheritor of the crown, one who might inherit also his name and virtues. He was still in the full vigour of his manhood, and the autumn of years was invisible on his brow. No "single silverings" yet marked the raven ringlets which waved down his temples; and, though his years were forty and three, his appearance did not betoken him to be above thirty.

His people, therefore, wished, and his courtiers urged, that he should marry again; and fame pointed out the lovely Jolande, the daughter of the Count of Dreux, as his bride.

When Patrick Douglas, the learned and honoured, but fortuneless soldier, found that his new competitor for the hand of the gentle Jolande was none other than his sovereign, he was dumb with despair, and the last, the miserable *hope* which it imparts, and which maketh wretched, began to leave him. He now accused himself for having been made the sacrifice of a wild and presumptuous dream, and again he thought of the kindly smile and the look of sorrow which met together on her countenance, when, in a rash, impassioned moment, he fell on his knee before her, and made known what his heart felt.

But, before another sun rose, Patrick Douglas, the honoured military adventurer of King Philip, was not to be found in the palace of the Count de Dreux. Many were the conjectures concerning his sudden departure; and, amongst those conjectures, as regarding the cause, many were right. But Jolande stole to her chamber, and in secret wept for the brave stranger.

More than two years passed away, and the negociations between the courts of Scotland and of France, respecting the marriage of King Alexander and Fair Jolande, were continued; but, during that period, even the name of Patrick Douglas, the Scottish soldier, began to be forgotten—his learning became a dead letter, and his feats of arms continued no longer the theme of tongues. It is seldom that kings are such tardy wooers; but between the union of the good Alexander and the beautiful Jolande many obstacles were thrown. When, however, their nuptials were finally agreed to, it was resolved that they should be celebrated on a scale of magnificence such as the world had not seen. Now, the loveliest spot in broad Scotland, where the Scottish King could celebrate the gay festivities, was the good town of Jedworth, or, as it is now called, Jedburgh. For it was situated, like an Eden, in the depth of an impenetrable forest; gardens circled it; wooded hills surrounded it; precipices threw their shadows over flowery glens; wooded hills embraced it, as the union of many arms; waters murmured amidst it; and it was a scene on which man could not gaze without forgetting, or regretting his fallen nature. Yea, the beholder might have said—"If the earth be yet so lovely, how glorious must it have been ere it was cursed because of man's transgression!"

Thither, then, did the Scottish monarch, attended by all the well-affected nobles of his realm, repair to meet his bride. He took up his residence in the castle of his ancestors, which was situated near the Abbey, and his nobles occupied their own, or other houses, in other parts of the town; for Jedburgh was then a great and populous place, and, from the loveliness of its situation, the chosen residence of royalty. (It is a pity but that our princes and princesses saw it now, and they would hardly be again charmed with the cold, dead, and bare beach of Brighton.) An old writer (I forget whom) has stated, in describing the magnitude of Jedburgh in those days, that it was six times larger than Berwick. This, however, is a mistake; for Berwick, at that period, was the greatest maritime town in the kingdom, and surpassed London, which strove to rival it.

On the same day that King Alexander and his splendid retinue reached Jedburgh, his bride, escorted by the nobles of France and their attendants, also arrived. The dresses of the congregated thousands were gorgeous as summe flowers, and variegated as gorgeous. The people looked with wonder on the glittering throng. The trees had lost the hues of their fresh and living green—for brown October threw its deep shadows o'er the landscape—but the leaves yet trembled on the boughs from which they were loath to part; and, as a rainbow that had died upon the trees, and left its hues and impression there, the embrowning forest appeared.

The marriage ceremony was performed in the Abbey, before Morel, the Lord Abbot, and glad assembled thousands The town and the surrounding hills became a scene of joy The bale-fires blazed from every hill; music echoed in the streets; and from every house, while the light of tapers gleamed, was heard the sounds of dance and song. The Scottish maiden and the French courtier danced by the side of the Jed together. But chief of all the festive scene was the assembly in the hall of the royal castle. At the farther end of the apartment, elevated on a purple covered dais, sat King Alexander, with the hand of his bridal queen locked in his. On each side were ranged, promiscuously, the Scottish and the French nobility, with their wives, daughters, and sisters. Music lent its influence to the scene, and the strains of a hundred instruments blended in a swell of melody.

Thrice a hundred tapers burned suspended from the roof, and on each side of the hall stood twenty men with branches of blazing pine. Now came the morris dance, with the antique dress and strange attitudes of the performers, which was succeeded by a dance of warriors in their coats of mail, and with their swords drawn. After these a masque, prepared by Thomas the Rhymer, who sat on the right hand of the King, followed; and the company laughed, wept, and wondered, as the actors performed their parts before them.

But now came the royal dance; the music burst into a bolder strain, and lord and lady rose, treading the strange measure down the hall, after the King and his fair Queen. Louder, and yet more loud the music pealed; and, though it was midnight, the multitude without shouted at its enlivening strains. Blithely the dance went on, and the King well nigh forgot the measure as he looked enraptured in the fair face of his beauteous bride.

He turned to take her hand in the dance and in its stead

the bony fingers of a skeleton were extended to him. He shrank back aghast; for royalty shuddereth at the sight of Death, as doth a beggar, and, in its presence, feeleth his power to be as the power of him who vainly commanded the waves of the sea to go back. Still the skeleton kept true measure before him—still it extended to him its bony hand. He fell back, in horror, against a pillar where a torch-bearer stood. The lovely Queen shrieked aloud, and fell as dead upon the ground. The music ceased—silence fell on the multitude—they stood still—they gazed on each other Dismay caused the cold damp of terror to burst from every brow, and timid maidens sought refuge and hid their faces on the bosom of strangers. But still, visible to all, the spectre stood before the king, its bare ribs rattling as it moved, and its finger pointed towards him. The music, the dancers, became noiseless, as if death had whispered—"*Hush!—be still!*" For the figure of Death stood in the midst of them, as though it mocked them, and no sound was heard save the rattling of tis bones, the moving of its teeth, and the motion of its fingers before the king.

The lord abbot gathered courage, he raised his crucifix from his breast, he was about to exorcise the strange spectre, when it bent its grim head before him, and vanished as it came—no man knew whither.

"Let the revels cease!" gasped the terror-stricken king; and they did cease. The day had begun in joy, it was ended in terror. Fear spread over the land, and while the strange tale of the marriage spectre was yet in the mouths of all men, yea before six months had passed, the tidings spread that the good King Alexander, at whom the figure of Death had pointed its finger, was with the dead, and his young queen a widow in a strange land.

The appearance of the spectre became a tale of wonder amongst all men, descending from generation to generation, and unto this day it remains a mystery. But, on the day after the royal festival at Jedburgh, Patrick Douglas, the learned soldier, took the vows, and became a monastic brother at Melrose; and, though he spoke of Jolande in his dreams, he smiled, as if in secret triumph, when the spectre that had appeared to King Alexander was mentioned in his hearing.

THE SIMPLE MAN IS THE BEGGAR'S BROTHER.

"MANY a time," said Nicholas Middlemiss, as he turned round the skirts and the sleeve of his threadbare coat to examine them, "many a time have I heard my mother say to my faither—'Roger, Roger, (for that was my faither's name,) *the simple man is the beggar's brother.*' But, notwithstanding my mother's admonitions, my faither certainly was a very simple man. He allowed people to take him in, even while they were laughing in his face at his simplicity. I dinna think that ever there was a week but that somebody or other owrereached him, in some transaction or other; for every knave, kennin' him to be a simpleton, (a nosey-wax as my mother said,) always laid their snares to entrap Roger Middlemiss—and his family were the sufferers. He had been a manufacturer in Langholm for many a long year, and at his death he left four brothers, a sister and mysel', four hundred pounds each Be it remembered, however, that his faither before him left him near to three thousand, and that was an uncommon fortune in those days—a fortune I may say that my faither might have made his bairns dukes by. Had he no been a simple man, his family might have said that they wouldna ca' the Duke o' Buccleugh their cousin. But he was simple—simplicity's sel'—(as my mother told him weel about it)—and he didna leave his bairns sae meikle to divide among them, as he had inherited from their grandfaither. Yet, if, notwithstanding his opportunities to make a fortune he did not even leave us what he had got, he at least left us his simpleness unimpaired. My brothers were honest men—owre honest, I am sorry to say, for the every day transactions of this world—but they always followed the *obliging* path, and kept their face in a direction, which, if they had had foresight enough to see it, was sure to land them *in*, or *on*, (just as ye like to take the expression,) their *native parish*. Now, this is a longing after the place o' one's birth for which I have no ambition; but on the parish it did land my brothers. My sister, too, was a poor simple thing, that married a man who had a wife living when he married her; and, after he had got every shilling that she had into his possession, he decamped and left her.

"But it is not the history of my brothers and sisters that I would tell you about, but my own. With the four hundred pounds which my faither left me, I began business as a linen manufacturer—that is, as a maister weaver, on what might be called a respectable scale. The year after I had commenced business upon my own account, and before I was two and twenty, I was taking a walk one Sunday afternoon on the Hawick road, along by Sorbie, and there I met the bonniest lassie, I think, that I had ever seen. I was so struck wi' her appearance, that I actually turned round and followed her. She was dressed in a duffel coat or pelisse, which I think country folk call a *Joseph*; but I followed her at a distance, through fields and owre stiles, till I saw her enter a sma' farm-house. There were some bits o' bairns, apparently hinds' bairns, sitting round a sort o' duck-dub near the stackyard.

"'Wha lives there, dearies?' says I to them, pointing wi' my finger to the farm-house.

"'Ned Thomson,' says they.

"'And wha was that bonny lassie,' asked I, 'that gaed in just the now?'

"'He! he! he!' the bairns laughed, and gied me nae answer. So I put my question to them again, and ane o the auldest o' them, a lassie about thirteen, said—'It was the maister's daughter, sir, the laird's bonny Jenny—if ye like, I'll gang in and tell her that a gentleman wishes to speak to her.'

"I certainly was very proud o' the bairn taking me to be a gentleman; but I couldna think o' meeting Miss Thompson even if she should come out to see me, wi' such an introduction, for I was sure I would make a fool o' mysel'; and I said to the bit lassie—'No I thank ye, hinny; I'm obliged to ye;' and a' her little companions 'he! he! he'd!' and laughed the louder at my expense; which, had I not been a simple man, I never would have placed it in their power to do.

"So I went away, thinking on her face as if I had been looking at it in a glass a' the time; and, to make a long story short, within three months, Miss Jenny Thompson and me became particularly weel acquaint. But my mother, who had none o' the simpleness that came by my faither's side o the house, was then living; and when Jenny and I were on the eve o' being publicly cried in the kirk, she clapped her affidavy against it.

"'Nicol,' said she, 'son as ye are o' mine, ye're a poor simple goniel. There isna a bairn that I have among ye to mend another. Ye are your faither owre again, every one o' ye—each one more simple than another. Will ye marry a taupie that has nae recommendation but a doll's face, and bring shame and sorrow to your door?'

"I flew into a rampaging passion wi' my mother, for levelling Jenny to either shame or sorrow: but she maintained that married we should not be, if she could prevent it; and she certainly said and did everything that lay in her power to render me jealous. She might as weel have lectured to a whinstane rock. I believed Jenny to be as pure as the dew that falleth upon a lily before sunrise in May. But on the very night before we were to be married, and when I went to fit on the gloves and the ring—to my horror and inexpressible surprise, who should I see in the farm-yard, (for it was a fine star-light night,) but my Jenny—my thrice cried bride—wi' her hand upon the shouther o' the auldest

son o' her faither's laird, and his arm round her waist. My first impulse was to run into the stackyard where they were, and to knock him down; but he was a strong lad, and, thinks I, 'second thoughts are best.' I was resolved, however, that my mother should find I wasna such a simpleton as she gied me out to be—so I turned round upon my heel and went home, saying to mysel, as the song says—

'If this be the way of courting a wife,
I'll never look after another;
But I'll away hame and live single my lane,
And I'll away hame to my mother.'

When I went hame, and informed her o' what I had seen, and o' what I had dune, the auld woman clapped me upon the shouther, and says she—'Nicholas, my man, I am glad that yer ain een have been made a witness in the matter of which your mother forewarned ye. Ye was about to bring disgrace upon your family; but I trust ye have seen enough to be a warning to ye. O Nicholas! they that marry a wife merely for the sake o' a bonny face, or for being a smart dancer, or onything o' that kind, never repent it but once, and that is for ever. Marriage lad, lifts the veil from the face o' beauty, and causes it to be looked upon as an every-day thing; and even if ye were short-sighted before, marriage will make ye see through spectacles that will suit your sight, whether ye will or no. Dinna think that I am against ye taking a wife; for I ken it is the best thing that a young man can do. Had your faither not married me when he did, he would hae died a beggar, instead o' leaving ye what he did. And especially a simple creature like you, Nicholas, needs one to take care o' him. But you must not expect to meet wi' such a one in every bonny face, handsome waist, or smart ancle that ye meet wi'. Na, na, lad; ye maun look to the heart, and the disposition or temper, and the affection for you. Thae are the grand points that ye are to study; and not the beauty o' the face, the shape o' the waist, (which a mantua-maker has a principal hand in making,) the colour o' the een, or the texture o' the hair. Thae are things that are forgotten before ye hae been married a twalmonth; but the feelings o' the heart, and the sentiments o the soul, aye rin pure, Nicholas, and grow stronger and stronger, just like a bit burn oozing frae a hill, and wimpling down its side, waxing larger and larger, and gathering strength on strength as it runs, until it meets the sea, like a great river; and even so it is wi' the affections o' the heart between man and wife, where they really love and understand each other; for they begin wi' the bit spring o' courtship, following the same course, gathering strength, and flowing side by side, until they fall into the ocean o' eternity, as a united river that cannot be divided Na, son, if ye will take a wife, I hope ye hae seen enough to convince ye that she ought never to be the bonny Miss Thompson. But if I might advise ye in the matter, there is our own servant, Nancy Bowmaker, a young lass, a weel-faured lass, and as weel behaved as she is good-looking. She has lived wi' us, now, for four years, and from term to term I never have had to quarrel her. I never saw her encouraging lads about the house—I never missed the value o' a prin since she came to it—I never even saw her light a candle at the fire, or keep the cruisy burning when she had naething to do but to spin, or to knit. Now, Nicholas, if ye will be looking after a wife, I say that ye canna do better than just draw up wi' Nancy Bowmaker.'

"So my mother ended her long-winded harangue, which I had hardly patience to listen to. In the course o' the week, the faither and brothers o' Miss Jenny Thompson called upon me, to see why I had not fulfilled my engagement, by taking her before the minister, and declaring her to be my wife. I stood before them like a man touched wi' a flash o' lightning—pale as death and trembling like a leaf. But, when they began to talk big owre me, and to threaten me wi' bringing the terrors o' the law upon my head—(and be it remembered I have an exceeding horror o the law, and would rather lose a pound ony day, than spend six and eightpence, which is the least ye can spend on it)—as good luck would have it, while they were stamping their feet, and shaking their nieves in my face, my mother came forward to where we were standing, and says she to me—'Nicholas, what is a' this about? What does Mr Thompson and his sons want?'

"The very sound o' her voice inspired me; I regained my strength and my courage, as the eagle renews its age. And simple man as I was—'Sir,' said I, 'what is it that ye mean? Gae ask your daughter wha it was that had his arm round her waist on Thursday night last, and her hand upon his shouther! Go to *him* to marry her!—but dinna hae the audacity to look me in the face.'

"'Weel said, Nicol,' whispered my mother, coming behint me, and clapping me on the back; 'aye act in that manner, my man.'

"And both her faither and her brothers stood looking one to another for an answer, and slunk away without saying another word either about the law or our marriage. I found I had gotten the whip hand o' them most completely. So, there never was another word between me and bonny Jenny Thompson, who, within a month, ran away wi' the son o' her faither's laird—and, poor hizzy, I am sorry to say, her end wasna a good one.

"My mother, however, always kept teasing me about Nancy Bowmaker, and saying what a notable wife she would make. Now, some folk are foolish enough to say that they couldna like onybody that was in a manner forced upon them. And, nae doubt, if either a faither or a mother, or onybody else that has power owre ye, says—"*Like* such a one," it is not in your power to comply, and actually love the person in obedience to a command. Yet this I will say, that my mother's sermons to me about Nancy Bowmaker, and my being always *evened* to her upon that account, caused me to think more about her than I did concerning ony other woman under the sun. And ye canna think lang about ony lass in particular, without beginning to have a sort o' regard for her, as it were. In short, I began to find that I liked Nancy just as weel as I had done Jenny: we, therefore, were married, and a most excellent and affectionate wife she has been to me, even to this day.

"It was now that I began the world in good earnest. But, though my wife was an active woman, I was still the same simple, easy-imposed-upon sort o' being that I had always been. Every rogue in the country-side very soon became acquainted wi' my disposition. I had no reason to complain of my business; for orders poured in upon me faster than I was able to supply them. Only, somehow or other—and I thought it very strange—money didna come in sae fast as the orders. My wife said to me—'This trade will never do, Nicholas—ye will gang on trust, trusting, until ye trust yoursel to the door. Therefore, do as I advise ye, and look after the siller.'

"'O my dear, said I, 'they are good customers, and I canna offend them for the sake o' a few pounds. I have no doubt but they are safe enough.'

"'Safe or no safe,' quoth she, 'get ye your accounts settled. Their siller will do as meikle for ye as their custom. Take a woman's advice for once, and remember, that, 'short accounts make long friends.' Look ye after your money.'

"I couldna but confess that there was a great deal o' truth in what Mrs Middlemiss (that is my wife) said to me. But I had not her turn for doing things. I could not be so sharp wi' folk, had it been to save my life. I never could affront onybody in my days. Yet I often wished that I could take her advice; for I saw people getting deeper and deeper into my books, without the prospect o' payment being made more manifest. Under such circumstances I began to think wi' her, that their siller would be as good as their custom—the one was not much worth without the other.

'But, just to give ye a few instances o my simplicity:—I was walking, on a summer evening, as my custom was, about a mile out o' the town, when I overtook a Mr Swanston, a very respectable sort o' man, a neighbour, and an auld acquaintance, who appeared to be in very great tribulation. I think, indeed, that I never saw a fellow-creature in such visible distress. His countenance was perfectly wofu', and he was wringing his hands like a body dementit.

"'Preserve us, Mr Swanston!' says I, 'what's the matter wi' ye?—has onything happened?'

"'Oh! happened!' said he; 'I'm a ruined man!—I wish that I had never been born!—that I had never drawn breath in this world o' villany! I believe I'll do some ill to mysel'.'

"'Dear me, Mr Swanston!' quoth I, 'I'm sorry to hear ye talk so. It is very unchristian like to hear a body talking o' doing harm to theirsels. There is a poet, (Dr Young, if I mistake not,) that says—

'Self-murder! name it not, our island's shame!'

Now, I dinna like to hear ye talking in such a way; and though I have no wish to be inquisitive, I would just beg to ask what it is upon your mind that is making ye unhappy?'

"'Oh, Mr Middlemiss,' said he, 'it is o' no use telling ye o't, for I believe that sympathy has left this world, as weel as honesty.'

"'Ye're no very sure o' that, neighbour,' says I; 'and I dinna think that ye do mysel' and other people justice.'

"'Maybe not, sir,' said he; 'but is it not a hard case, that, after I have carried on business for more than twenty years, honestly and in credit wi' all the world, that I should have to stop my business to-morrow, for the want o' three hundred pounds?'

"'It certainly is,' said I, 'a very hard case; but, dear me, Mr Swanston, I always thought that ye would be worth twenty shillings in the pound.'

"'So I am,' said he; 'I am worth twice twenty, if my things should be put up at their real value; but at present I canna command the ready money—and there is where the rock lies that I am to be wrecked upon.

"'Assuredly,' returned I, 'three hundred pounds are no bauble. It requires a person to turn owre a number o' shillings to make them up. But I would think that, you having been so long in business, and always having borne an irreproachable character, it would be quite a possible thing for you to raise the money amongst your friends.'

"'Sir, said he, 'I wouldna require them to raise the money, nor ever to advance or pay a farthing upon my account; all that I require is, that some sponsible person, such as yourself, would put their name to a bill for six months. There would be nothing but the signing o' the name required o' them; and if you, sir, would so far oblige me, ye will save a neighbour from ruin.'

"I thought there was something very reasonable in what he said, and that it would be a grand thing if by the mere signing o' my name, I could save a fellow-creature and auld acquaintance from ruin, or from raising his hand against his own life. Indeed, I always felt a particular pleasure in doing a good turn to onybody. I therefore said to him—"Weel, Mr Swanston, I have no objections to sign my name, if, as you say, that be all that is in it, and if my doing so will be of service to you.'

"He grasped hold o' my hand wi' both o' his, and he squeezed it until I thought he would have caused the blood to start from my finger ends.

"'Mr Middlemiss,' said he, 'I shall never be able to repay you for this act o' kindness. I will feel it in my heart the longest day I have to live.'

'I was struck with his agitation; in fact, I was very much put about. For even a tear upon the face o' a woman distresses me beyond the power o' words to describe; but to see the salt water on the cheeks of a man indicates that there is something dreadfully ill at ease about the heart. And really the tears ran down his face, as if he had been a truant school-laddie that had been chastised by his master.

"'There is no occasion for thanks, Mr. Swanston,' said I—'none in the world; for the man would be worse than a heathen, that wouldna be ready to do ten times more.

"Weel, he grasped my hand the harder, and he shook it more fervently, saying—'O, sir! sir!—a friend in need is a friend indeed; and such ye have proved to be—and I shall remember it.'

"That very night we went to a public-house, and we had two half mutchkins together; in the course of drinking which, he got out a stamped paper, and after writing something on it, which I was hardly in a condition to read, (for my head can stand very little,) he handed it to me, and pointed with his finger where I was to put my name upon the back o't. So I took the pen and wrote my name—after which, we had a parting gill, and were both very comfortable.

"When I went home, Nancy perceiving me to be rather sprung, and my een no as they ought to be, said to me—'Where have ye been, Nicholas, until this time o' nicht?'

"'Touts!' said I, 'what need ye mind? It is a hard matter that a body canna stir out owre the door but ye maun ask—'where hae ye been?' I'm my own maister, I suppose—at least after business hours.

"'No doubt o' that, Nicholas,' said she; 'but while ye are your own maister, ye are also my husband, and the faither o' my family, and it behoves me to look after ye.

"'Look after yoursel'!' said I, quite pettedly—for I am always very high and independent when I take a glass extra—ye wouldna tak me to be a simple man then.

"'There is no use in throwing yoursel' into a rage,' added she; 'for ye ken as weel as me, Nicholas, that ye never take a glass more than ye ought to do, but ye invariably make a fool o' yoursel' by what ye say or do, and somebody or other imposes on ye. And ye are so vexed with yoursel' the next day, that there is nae living in the house wi' ye. Ye wreak a' the shame and ill-nature that ye feel on account o' your conduct upon us.'

"'Nancy!' cried I, striking my hand upon the table, as though I had been an emperor, 'what in the name o' wonder do ye mean? Who imposes upon me?—who dare?—tell me that!—I say tell me that?' And I struck my hand upon the table again.

"'Owre mony impose upon ye, my man,' quoth she; 'and I hope naebody has been doing it the night, for I never saw ye come hame in this key, but that somebody had got ye to do something that ye was to repent afterwards.'

"'Confound ye, Nancy!' cried I, very importantly whipping up the tails o' my coat in a passion, and turning my back to the fire, while I gied a sort o' stagger, and my head knocked against the chimley-piece—'confound ye, Nancy, I say, what do ye mean? Simple man as ye ca' me, and as ye tak me to be, do ye think that I am to come home to get naething but a dish o' tongues from you! Bring me my supper.

"'Oh, certainly, ye shall have your supper,' said she, 'if ye can eat it—only I think that your bed is the fittest place for ye. O man,' added she in a lower tone, half speaking to hersel, 'but ye'll be sorry for this the morn.'

"'What the mischief are ye muttering at?' cried I—'get me my supper.'

"'Oh, ye shall have that,' said she very calmly, for she was, and is, a quiet woman, and one that would put up with a great deal, rather than allow her voice to be heard by her neighbours.

"My head was in a queer state the next day; for ye see I had as good as five glasses, and I never could properly stand above two. I was quite ashamed to look my wife in the face, and I was so certain that I had been guilty o' some absurdity or other, that my cheeks burned just under the dread o' its being mentioned to me. Neither could I drive the idea

of having put my name upon the back of the bill from my mind. I was conscious that I had done wrong. Yet, thought I, Mr Swanston is a very decent man; he is a very respectable man; he has always borne an excellent character; and is considered a good man, both amongst men o' business and in society—therefore, I have nothing to apprehend. I, according to his own confession, did him a good turn, and I could in no way implicate myself in his transactions by merely putting my name upon the back o' a bit o' paper, to oblige him. So I thought within myself, and I became perfectly satisfied that I had done a good action, without in the slightest degree injuring my family.

"But just exactly six months and three days afterwards, a clerk belonging to a branch o' the Commercial Bank called upon me, and, after making his bow, said he—'Mr Middlemiss, I have a bill to present to you.'

"'A bill!' said I, 'what sort o' a bill, sir? Is it an auctioneer's for a roup o' furniture, or a sale o' stock?'

"He laughed quite good-natured like in my face, and pulling out the bit stamped paper that I had been madman enough to sign my name upon the back o'—'It is that, sir,' said he.

"'That!' cried I; 'what in the earthly globe have I to do wi' that? It is Mr Swanston's business—not mine. I only put my name upon the back o' it to *oblige* him. Why do ye bring it to me?'

"'You are responsible, sir,' said the clerk.

"'Responsible! the meikle mischief!' I exclaimed; 'what am I responsible for, sir?—I only put my name doun to oblige him, I tell ye! For what am I responsible?'

"'For three hundred pounds, and legal interest for six months,' said my unwelcome visiter, wi' a face that shewed as little concern for the calamity in which, through mere simplicity and goodness of heart, I was involved, as if he had ordered me to take a pipe, and blow three hundred soap-bubbles!

"'Oh! lack-o'-me!' cried I, 'is that possible? Is Mr Swanston sic a villain? I am ruined—I am clean ruined. Who in all the world will tell Nancy?'

"But that I found was a question that I did not need to ask; for she kenned almost as soon as I did mysel'.

"I need not say that I had the three hundred pounds, interest and all, plack and farthing, to pay; though, by my folly and simplicity, I had brought my wife and family to the verge o' ruin, she never was the woman to fling my silly conduct in my teeth; and all that she ever did say to me upon the subject, was—'Weel, Nicholas, this is the first o' your bill transactions, or o' your being caution for onybody, and I trust it has proved such a lesson as I hope ye will never need another.'

"'O Nancy, woman!' cried I, 'dinna speak to me! for I could knock my brains oot! I am the greatest simpleton upon the face o' the earth.'

"Now, that was one instance o' my simple conduct and its consequences, and I will just relate to you another or two. I had bought some ninety pounds worth o' flax from a merchant in Glasgow, for which I was to receive six months' credit. Weel, he came round for his money at the appointed time, and I paid him accordingly, and got a line off his hand in acknowledgment. On that very day, and just about an hour after he had left, Nancy says to me—'Nicholas, I dinna owre and aboon like that man that ye hae been dealing wi' the day. He has owre muckle gab, and scraping, and bowing for me. I wish he may be honest. Have ye got a receipt from him?'

"'Certainly,' says I; 'do ye think I would pay onybody money without one?'

"'And I hope it is on a stamp,' said she.

"'A stamp!' quoth I—'a stamp!—hoots, woman! I wonder to see ye so suspicious. Ye dinna tak a' the wor'd to be rogues?'

"'No,' said she, 'I do not, and I should be sorry if I did; but if ye hae taken a receipt from him without a stamp ye are a simple man—that is all that I say.'

"'A simple man!' cried I; 'gracious! what does the woman mean? Ye are for ever saying that I am simple this, and simple that! I wish that ye would explain yoursel, and say what ye wish to be after! Where, or how am I simple?

"'It's not been one lesson that you've had, Nicholas, said she, 'nor ten, nor twenty either but it is every week, I may say every day, wi' ye. There is perpetually some person or another shewing ye that the 'simple man is the beggar's brother,' and ye canna see it, or ye winna regard it. But ye will, perhaps, be brought to think on't, when neither your bairns nor me have a stool to sit upon.'

"'Woman!' exclaimed I, 'flesh and blood cannot stand your tongue! Ye would exasperate the patience o' Job! What is it that ye wish to be after?—what would ye have me to do?'

"'Oh, it is o nae use getting into a passion about it,' said she, 'for that winna mend the matter. But there is only this in it, Nicholas: I would have ye to be as sharp in your dealings in the world, as ye are wi' me when I happen to speak a word to ye for your good.'

"There was so much truth in what she said, and she always spoke in such a calm, good-natured manner, that it was impossible to continue to be in a passion wi' her. So I said no more about the subject; but I thought to mysel, that, as I knew very little about the man I had dealt with, it would hae been quite as safe to have had the receipt upon a stamp.

"A few months afterwards, I saw his name amongst the list o' bankrupts; and to my very great astonishment, I received a letter from a writer, demanding payment from me o' the ninety pounds for the flax which I had already paid.

"'The thing is unreasonable a'thegither,' said I; 'here is a man that hasna paid once himself, and he would come upon me to pay twice! But I'll see him far enough first!'

"I paid no attention to the letter, and I was summoned to appear before the writer, and three men that were called the trustees to the bankrupt's estate. (Dear kens where the estate lay.)

"'Sir,' said they to me, as haughtily as if I had been a criminal before them; 'wherefore do ye refuse to pay the ninety pounds?'

"'For the best o' a' reasons, gentlemen, said I, very civilly; 'and that simply is, because I have paid it already.'

"'What proof can ye shew for that?' asked the writer.

"'Proof, sir,' said I—'here is a line off the man's own hand, acknowledging the payment o' every farthing o' the money.'

"'Let me look at it, says he.

"So, as honesty never needs to be feared for what it does, I handed him the bit paper. But after looking at it for a moment, he held it up between his finger and thumb, and wi' a kind o' sarcastic laugh, inquired—'Where is the stamp?'

"The sweat broke owre me from head to foot. 'Sir, said I, 'what has a stamp to do wi' it?—ye are as bad as my wife, Nancy! Is that document, in the handwriting o' the man himsel', not proof positive that I have paid the money?'

"The writer shook his head; and a gentleman that was standing near me, and who was very probably in a similar predicament to myself, said—'Unstamped receipts, sir, may do very well, where ye find a world o' purely honest men—but they winna do where ye arena sure but ye may be dealing wi' a rogue.'

"'Gentlemen!' cried I, 'have ye really the cruelty and injustice to say that I am to pay that money owre again?'

"'Owre again or not owre again,' said the writer, 'ye must pay it, otherwise summary proceedings will be entered against ye. If ye have already paid it in the way ye say, it is only making good the proverb, that the 'simple man is the beggar's brother.'"

"'Oh, confound ye!' cried I, 'for a parcel o' unprincipled knaves—that is exactly what my wife says; and had I followed her advice, I would ne'er hae seen ane o' yer faces.'

"However, the ninety pounds I had to pay again, doun upon the nail; and that was another o' the beautiful effects o' my simplicity. I didna ken how, in the universal globe, I was to muster courage to look my wife in the face again. Yet all that she said, was—'O Nicholas! Nicholas!—would ye only be less simple!'

"'Heigho!' said I, 'dinna talk aboot it, Nancy—I'm owre grieved as it is—I can stand no more!'

"The loss o' the three hundred pounds, wi' the bill business, and the ninety just mentioned, made me to stagger, and those that knew about the circumstances wondered how I stood them. But I had just begun a new concern, which was the manufacture o' table-cloths upon a new principle, and with exceedingly splendid patterns. I got an extraordinary sale for them, and orders came pouring in upon me. But I had to employ more men to fulfil them, and their wages were to pay every Saturday, while the remittances did not come in by half so regular as the orders, and I found it was not easy to pay men without receiving money for their work. Had I been a man o' a great capital, the case might have been different. There was one day, however, that a gentleman that had dealt wi' me very extensively called upon me, and he gied me a very excellent order. But, although he had seen a great deal o' my goods, I never had seen the shadow o' his cash. I canna say that I exactly liked his manner o' doing business; yet I couldna, for the breath that was in my body, have the face to say an impertinent thing to ony one, and I was just telling him that his order should be attended to, when my wife, who was sitting in a room off the parlour, gave a tap upon the door, and asking the gentleman to excuse me for a minute, I stepped ben, and I half whispered to her—'What is it, dear?'

"'Has that man spoken about paying ye?' said she.

"'No,' said I.

"'But I think it is time he was,' quoth she, 'before ye trust him ony farther. Remember that ye have men's wages to pay, and accounts to pay, and a wife and family to support, and those things canna be done upon nothing.'

"'Very true, dearie,' said I; 'but ye wouldna have me to speak abruptly to the gentleman, or to affront him?'

"'It will affront no gentleman,' replied she—'at least, no honest man—to ask him for what is your own. Therefore, ask him for your money. Remember, Nicholas, that the simple man is the beggar's brother.'

"'O dear, woman!' says I, 'ye ken I dinna like to hear thae words. I'll ask the gentleman to pay me—to be sure I will; and what is the use o' you keeping tease, teasing at a body, just as if I were a simpleton.'

"So I slipped back to the customer, and, after a few words about his order, I said to him—'Sir, ye understand that I have men's wages to pay, and accounts to pay, and a wife and family to support, and it's no little that does it; therefore, if ye could just oblige me wi' the settlement o' your account, it would be a favour.

"'My dear Mr Middlemiss,' said he, 'I am extremely sorry that you did not inform me that you were in want of cash sooner, as I have just, before I saw you, parted with all I can spare. But, if you be very much in want of it, I can give you a note, that is, a bill for the money, at three or six months. You can get it cashed, you know, and it is only minus the discount, and that is not much upon your profits, eh?'

"'Begging your pardon, sir, says I, 'but I take I would have my name to write on the back o't.'

"'Certainly, sir,' said he, 'you know that follows as a matter of course.'

"'Yes, sir, continued I, 'and I have found that it sometimes follows also as a matter o' *coercion!* I never had to do wi' what ye call a bill in my life but once, which was merely writing my name upon the back o' it, and that cost me three hundred pounds—exactly sixteen pounds, two shillings and threepence, and a fraction, for every letter in the name of Nicholas Middlemiss, as my wife has often told me, Therefore, sir, I would never wish to see the *face* o' a bill again; or, I should say the *back* o' one.'

"'But, my good sir,' said the gentleman, 'I have told yo that it is not convenient for me to give you the cash just now; and, if you won't take my bill, why, what do you wish me to do? Do you intend to affront me? Do you suppose I have nothing to attend to but your account?'

"'Oh, by no means, sir,' said I; 'and it would be the last thing in my thoughts either to offend you or ony man. If ye have not the money at command, I suppose I must take the bill; for I know that cash down is a sort o' curiosity, as I sometimes say, and is very difficult to be met wi'.'

"While we were conversing thegither, I heard my wife gie a tap, tap, tap, twice or thrice upon the parlour door, and I was convinced that she owreheard us; but I didna take the least notice o' it, for I felt conscious that it would only be to ring the auld sang in my ears, about the simple man. So I took the gentleman's bill at six months; and immediately after he left me, Nancy came into the parlour.

"'Weel,' said she, 'ye've gotten your money.' But she said it wi' a scornful' air, such as I had never seen her use before, and which caused me to feel excessively uncomfortable.

"'Yes, I've got my money,' says I, 'but, dear me, Nancy, what business is it o' your's whether I have got my money or no?'

"'If it isna my business, Nicholas,' said she, 'I would like to ken whase business it is? I am the wife o' your bosom—the mother o' your family—am I not? Guidman, ye may take ill what I say to ye, but it is meant for your good. Now, ye hae ta'en the bill o' the man that has just left ye, for four hundred and odd pounds! What do ye ken aboot him? Naething!—naething in the blessed world! Ye are a simple man, Nicholas!'

"'Dinna say that,' said I; 'I am not simple. I told him to his face that I didna like his bills. But ye are like a' women—ye would do wonders if ye were men! But his bill prevents a' disputes about his account—do ye not see that—and I can cash it if I wish.'

"'Very true, said she, 'ye can cash it, Nicholas, but upon your own credit, and at your own risk.'

"'Risk!' said I; 'the woman's a fool, to talk in such a manner about an every-day transaction.

"'Weel,' answered she, 'not to say that there is the slightest risk in the matter, have ye considered, that, if ye do cash this bill, there will be a heavy discount to pay, and if ye pay it, what is to become o' your profits? Did ye tell him, that if ye took his bill ye would carry the discount to his next account?'

"'O Nancy! Nancy!' cried I, 'ye would skin the wind! Just take yoursel' away, if ye please; for really ye're tormenting me—making a perfect gowk o' me, for neither end nor purpose.

"'Oh, if that be the way,' said she, 'I can leave ye—but I have seen the day when ye thought otherwise o' my company. Yet, the more I see o' your transactions, Nicholas, the more am I convinced in the truth o' the saying, that the simple man is the beggar's brother.'

"'Sorrow take ye, wife!' cried I, 'will ye really come owre thae words again. Are ye not aware that I detest and abhor them? Have I not said that to ye again and again?—and yet ye will repeat them in my hearing! Do ye wish to drive me mad?'

"'I would wish to see ye act,' answered she, 'so that I would ne'er need to use them again.' And, on saying that, she went out o' the room, which to me was a great deliverance.

"I got the bill cashed, and, to tell ye the plain truth, I also had it to pay. This was a dreadfu' loss to me; and I found there was naething left for me but to *sit down*, (if ye understand what that means,) as mony a guid man has been compelled to do. Hooever, I paid everybody seventeen shillings and sixpence half-penny in the pound. Some of my creditors said it was owre meikle—that I had been simple and wronged mysel'.

"'I would wish to the utmost o' my power to be honest,' said I; 'and, if I hae wronged mysel', I hae saved my conscience. If there be naething else left for me noo, as Burns says—

'Heaven be thankit! I can beg.'

"My business, hooever, had been entirely at a stand for the space o' sax weeks. I had neither journeyman nor apprentice left. My looms, and the hale apparatus connected wi' the concern, had been sold off, and I had naething in the warld but a few articles o' furniture, which a freend bought back for me at the sale. I got the loan o' a loom, and in order to support my wife and family, I had to sit down to drive the shuttle again. I had wrought nane to speak o' for ten years before, and my hands were quite oot o' use. I made but a puir job o' it. The first week I didna mak aboon half-a-crown; and that was but a sma' sum for the support o' a wife and half-a-dozen hungry bairns. Hooever, I was still as simple as ever; and there wasna a wife in the countryside that was a bad payer, but brought her web to Nicholas Middlemiss. I wrought late and early; but though I did my utmost, I couldna keep my bairns' teeth gaun. Many a time it has wrung my heart, when I hae heard them crying to their mother, clinging round her, and pulling at her apron, saying—'Mother, gie's a piece!—Oh just a wee bite, mother!'

"'O my darlings,' she used to say to them, 'dinna ask me for bread the noo. I haena a morsel in the house, and hae na siller to buy meal. But yer faither is aboot finished wi' the web, and ye shall hae plenty the nicht.'

"Then the bits o' dear creatures would hae come runnin' ben to me, and asked—'Faither, when will the web be ready?'

"'Soon, soon, hinnies!' said I, half choked wi' grief and blind wi' tears; 'haud awa' oot and play yoursels!'

"For I couldna stand to see them yearning afore me, and to behold want, like a gnawing worm, eating the flesh from their lovely cheeks. Then, when I had went out wi' the web, Naney would say to me—'Noo, Nicholas, remember the situation we're in. There's neither food o' ae description nor anither in the house, and ye see the last o' oor coals upon the fire. Therefore, afore ye leave the web, see that ye get the money for the working o't.'

"Yet, scores o' times, even after such admonitions, hae I come hame without a penny in my pocket. Ane put me aff with ae excuse, and anither wi' anither. Some were to ca' and pay me on the Saturday, and others when they killed their pig. But those Saturdays seldom came; and, in my belief, the pigs are living yet. It used to put me in terror to meet my poor starving family. The consequence generally was, that Nancy had to go to where I had come frae and request payment hersel'; and, at last, she wadna trust me wi' the taking hame o' the webs.

"We suffered more than I'm willing to tell aboot, at the period I mention, and a' arose oot o' my simpleness. But I was confined to my bed for ten weeks, wi' a dreadfu' attack o' rheumatism—it was what was ca'ed a rheumatic fever—it reduced me to a perfect anatomy. I was as feckless as a half-burned thread. Through fatigue, anxiety, and want o' support thegither, Nancy also took very ill; and there did we lie to a' appearance hastening to the grave. What we suffered, and what our family suffered upon this occasion, no person in a Christian country could believe. But for the kindness o' the minister, and some o' oor neebors, we must a' hae perished. As a matter of course we fell sadly back; and when the house-rent became due, we had not wherewith to pay it. The landlord distrained us for it. A second time the few things I had left were put under the hammer o' the auctioneer. 'Oh!' said I, 'surely misery and I were born thegither!' For we had twa dochters, the auldest only gaun six, baith lying ill o' the scarlet fever in the same bed, and I had to suffer the agony o' beholding the bed sold out from under them. It was more than human nature could endure. The poor, dear lammies cried—'Faither! mither! dinna let them touch us!' I took the auldest up in my arms, and begged that I micht be allowed a blanket to row her in. Nancy took up the youngest one: and while the sale went on, with our dying bairns in our arms, we sat down in the street before the door, as twa beggars—but we were not begging.

"Our case excited universal commiseration. A number o' respectable people began to take an interest in our weelfare; and business came so thick upon me that I had to get twa other looms, and found constant employment, not only for my auldest laddie, whom I was bringing up to the business, but also for a journeyman.

"Just as I was beginning to prosper, hooever, and to get my head aboon the water, there was ane o' my auld creditors to whom I had paid the composition of seventeen and sixpence halfpenny in the pound, wha was a hard-hearted, avaricious sort o' man, and to whom I had promised, and not only promised, but given a written pledge, to pay him the remaining two and fivepence halfpenny in the pound, together with interest, in the course of six years. The time was just expiring, when he came to me, and presenting the bit paper, which was in my own handwriting, demanded payment.

"'Really, sir,' said I, 'I acknowledge that I must pay ye, though everybody said at the time that I was a very simple man for entering into ony such agreement wi' ye; but it is not in my power to pay ye just now. In the course o' a twalmonth I hope to be able to do it.'

"'Mr Middlemiss,' said he, as slowly as if he were spelling my name, 'my money I want, and my money I will have; and have it immediately, too.'

"'Sir,' said I, 'the thing is impossible, I canna gie ye what I haena got.'

"'I dinna care for that,' said he; 'if I dinna get it, I shall *get you*.'

"He had the cruelty to throw me into jail, just as I was beginning to gather my feet. It knocked all my prospects in the head again. I began to say it was o' nae use for me to strive, for the stream o' fate was against me.'

"'Dinna say so, Nicholas,' said Nancy, who came on foot twice every week, a' the way from Langholm, to see me—'dinna say sae. Yer ain simplicity is against ye—naething else.'

"Weel, the debt was paid, and I got my liberty. But, come weel come wo, I was still simple Nicol Middlemiss. Ne'er hae I been able to get the better o' my easy disposition. It has made me acquainted wi' misery—it has kept me constantly in the company o' poverty; and, when I'm dead, if onybody erect a gravestane for me, they may inscribe owre it—

'THE SIMPLE MAN IS THE BEGGAR'S BROTHER."

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE COVENANTING FAMILY.

THIRTY years ago, there dwelt an old man named Simon Cockburn, who followed the avocations of parish teacher and precentor. Every Saturday afternoon, after he had washed his hands from the labours of the week, he went down to the public-house of the village in which he dwelt, and took his seat by the parlour window or fire, (according as it was summer or winter,) to read the newspaper, and see, as he said, "what country Buonaparte had conquered *this* week;" and, as Simon read of some new achievement of "the terrible Corsican," as he called him, he was wont to lay down the newspaper, take off his spectacles, and say unto himself aloud, "But if the chield should come owre to Britain, surely he will never be guilty o' the cruelty and folly o' doing onything to the parish schoolmasters. He owes so much to learning himsel', that he will certainly respect those who impart it to others."

But, if a stranger chanced to be in the room when he had glanced over the news, and as he began to warm and wax mighty over his single pint (or mutchkin) bottle of strong ale, Simon's wonted taciturnity gave way to a flow of speech; and seldom had the conversation continued long, when he invariably inquired—"Did ever ye hear o' the saying, by what law the bishops were expelled from Scotland?"

The answer being in the negative, he continued—"Weel, it was neither by civil law nor by canon law, but by *Dunse Law!*"

"By Dunse law, old man!" inquired his auditors—"why, what law is that?"

"If ye never heard o' it," answered he, "it is worth your while going to see it. Ye may become acquainted wi' it without paying a fee to a writer. Dunse Law, Sir, is a bonny round hill, which rises behind the honest town o' that name. Ye have a magnificent view upon the top o' it. In my opinion it is equal to the view from the Calton at Edinburgh; and some of my scholars that have been travellers, inform me that the view from the Calton is every way equal to the far-famed view in the bay o' Naples. Ye have the whole Merse lying beneath your feet, like a beautifully laid out and glorious garden—the garden o' some mighty conqueror, that had converted a province into a pleasure ground, and walled it round wi' mountains. There ye behold the Blackadder wimpling along—the Whitadder curling round below you, and as far as ye can see, now glittering in a haugh, or buried amongst woody braes. Before ye, also, ye behold the Cheviots, and the Northumberland hills, wi' a broad country, the very sister o' the Merse, lying below them, and which runs to Tweedside, where they stand and look at each other! Down the middle distance, runs the Tweed, shining out here and there, like an illuminated lake, and receiving the Border rivers o' both countries into its bosom, just as a hen gathers its young under its wings. To the right hand, also, ye behold Roxburghshire, wi' the dimness o' distance, like a thin veil thrown owre its beauty, and its hills a' before ye. Ye see also the smoke arising from towns, villages, and hamlets, and hovering owre them in the mid-way air, like almost transparent clouds. Gentlemen's seats, and the plantations around them, lie scattered owre the scene; farmhouses that lairds might live in, and stackyards that no other country could produce. On each elbow ye have the purple Lammermuir, where a hundred hirsels graze; and to the east, the mighty ocean, wi' the ships sailing upon it, where, wi' their white sails spread to the sun, they look from the distance, just like sea-birds poising themselves on their outstretched wings owre the deep. Ye see also the islands that rise wondrously from its bosom—fragments which the great waters have stolen from the dry land, or the dry land from the waters. But I ought to have mentioned that, before ye, also, ye see the ruins of castles—some o' them still majestic—which changed masters a hundred times, as victory chanced to decide for the English bow or the Scottish spear, and which yet bear manifestations o' having been places o' strength and terror. All these things, Sir, and mony more, do ye see from Dunse Law—for I have described it very imperfectly; but I hope I have said enough to convince ye that it is no every-day view. And now, I shall endeavour to explain to ye the meaning o the saying, that the bishops were expelled from Scotland by *Dunse Law.*

"When the first and unfortunate King Charles had the infatuation, and I may also say the cruelty, to attempt to bend and twist the consciences o' our forefaithers, just as if they had been willows in the hands o' a basket-maker, to make them swallow the service-book, and to clothe and feed bishops, and bow their heads to them—they, like men who regarded liberty o' conscience, the freedom o' their country, and, above all, the right o' worshipping their Maker as he had commanded them in his word, to be dearer than life—when the king caused his troopers to ride rough-shod out owre Scotland, and to awe them into obedience with the naked sword—they also laid their hands upon their swords, ready to resist; and flying to the hills, they congregated together a mighty army.

"The watchword o' the heroic army was—'*For Christ's Crown and the Covenant;*' and having congregated together to the number of many thousands, they, in accordance with the wish of the Tables and chief men, were placed under the command of the famous General Leslie. When, therefore, the king heard of these things, he set out from London towards Scotland, at the head of his gay cavaliers and valorous men of war, doubting not but that at the glance of his royal eyes the rebellious Scottish peasants would be stricken with awe and reverence, lay down their arms, and bend their necks before him. Now, General Leslie was an old man, and a little man; but he had a wise head, and, like Buonaparte, he had a mighty spirit in his wee breast; and, when he heard that the king was on his way to Scotland, at the head o' a regular army, he resolved to meet him face to face; and for that purpose the army o' the Covenant marched forward to Dunglass.

"But when Charles learned from his spies accounts of the numbers, the discipline, and enthusiasm of the Covenanters, his heart failed him; and when he looked on his own army, and perceived that they neither had zeal in his cause, nor discipline, nor numbers, to enable them to contend against the army that he was leading them to oppose, he lowered his tone marvellously. He found that the divine prerogative which surrounds kings is but a broken hedge, owre which every outlaw may trample, where the hearts and affections o' the people dinna form an outer bulwark around it. And, though, a few days before, he had denounced all the inhabitants of Scotland as traitors, and threatened, in the arrogance

and confidence o' his heart, to deal with them as such, and had even given orders to his generals to wreak their vengeance on the rebels—he was now glad to send Lord Holland, with a trumpeter, to the camp of the Covenanters at Dunglass, to proclaim to them that he was willing to grant them all their demands, and that their country should be free, provided they would profess their allegiance to him, and not approach within ten miles o' the Border.

"Now, Sir, the Covenanters were by no means Republicans in their principles: all they wanted was freedom—freedom o' mind and body; the right of worshipping in the manner most agreeable to their conscience, and o' not being compelled to unbutton their pockets to pay for objects of which they disapproved. They had a sort o' liking for Charlie. His faither was a Scotchman, and had been born among them; and they were anxious to like him, if he would only put it in their power to do it. They were loath to draw the sword against him; and, when they did do it, it was for conscience' sake. They, therefore, accepted his conditions readily; for he promised fairly, and as much, if not more, than they expected to wring from him by the slaugh er o' his troops, and steeping the land wi' the blood o' its inhabitants.

"When Charles, therefore, heard o' the readiness with which they had agreed to his proposal, in the vanity and delusion o' his spirit, he attributed it to his great power and glory as a king; and he repented that he had not offered to them more haughty and less righteous terms. But those that he had proposed to them he had no design to keep.

"He, therefore, marched forward his army, and encamped on the south bank o' the Tweed, above Berw'ck, at a place which historians call the Birks—which I take to be the fields lying between West Ord and Norham Castle. Here he soon gave proofs that, having come from the Thames to the Tweed, it was his resolution not to return until he had wreaked his vengeance on the people of Scotland, whom he still regarded as rebels.

"When, therefore, General Leslie heard of the King's doings, he gave orders to his army to march towards Dunse.

"But, before proceeding farther, I must make mention of a Covenanting family, who are to be more particularly the objects of my present discourse. At that time, there resided in the Castle Wynd in Dunse, a singular and godly woman—one Alice Cockburn, (or, as some called her, Weatherburn, that being her maiden name.) She was the wife o' a devout and worthy man, one Alexander Cockburn, who was the proprietor o' a croft in the neighbourhood; and they had five sons, all men grown. Their names were John, James, Andrew, William; and the youngest, who was nineteen, was called Alexander, after his faither. I hae mentioned Alice first, not only because her name will be hereafter mentioned in this narrative, but also because, while we often speak in triumph o' what our faithers did in securing our civil and religious liberty, we forget to do justice to our mothers, who were even more enthusiastic in the great and glorious cause than our faithers were. They fired their zeal—they first lifted up a voice against tyranny—and while our faithers fought in the field, they bound up their bleeding wounds, brought water from the brooks to cool their parched lips, and were purveyors to the army—supplying them with clothing and with food.

"It was on the evening of the 5th of June 1639, that Alice Cockburn hastened into her house, exclaiming—'Rise, husband!—rise, sons!—arm yoursels, and let us awa to Dunse Law; for there is a sicht to be seen there the nicht, such as never before was witnessed in a' broad Scotland, nor yet in a' Christendie. Haste ye! gird your swords upon your thighs, and away to assist the armies o' the kirk and our country, to do battle against the Philistines.'

"'Tell us what ye mean, Alice,' said her husband. 'The King an' his cavaliers are still near Berwick; I hae heard naething o' our people havin' left Dunglass and there can be nae battle on Dunse Law the nicht—therefore, what is it ye allude to?'

"'The King may be whar ye say,' replied she; 'but General Leslie and our men are encamping upon the Law; and they are a host whose numbers seem countless as the sand upon the sea-shore. Our oppressors will be consumed as stubble before them, and tyrants will become their captives. Haste ye, sons; arm yersels to be ready for the fight that is to fight. Enrol yersels in the army o' the righteous, for the sake o' the truth, for the sake o' conscience and yer country. And, on my death-bed, if I be deprived o' every other consolation, I will still be borne up by the secret joy, that my five sons, and my half-marrow, drew their swords, and fought, side by side, for the cause o' the Covenant.'

"'Alice,' said her husband, 'sae lang as I hae ye to stir me up, and mak me mair fervent in the great cause, which it is our duty to support with our whole might and our whole strength, ye shall never hear it said that Sandy Cockburn shunned the brunt o' danger, or that his sword returned empty when he met wi' an oppressor weapon to weapon. My richt hand is aulder and stiffer than it has been; but, when ance suppled, it has lost but little o' its strength—and I think I can answer for our sons.'

"'Ye may do that safely,' said John, their eldest; 'ther shall nae want o' daring be fixed to the name o' Cockburn.'

"His three younger brothers, James, Andrew, and William agreed with him, and spoke in the same manner; but Alexander, the youngest, and the faither's namesake, though generally esteemed the boldest amongst them, hastened not to provide himself with arms, as his brothers did, but he sat with his arms folded upon his bosom, and was silent.

"'Alexander,' said his mother, 'wherefore do ye sit wi' yer arms faulded, an' look like ane that wishes to conceal the word *coward* written on his breast?'

"'Nae man, no even my brothers, durst ca' me a coward, mother,' said he; 'but I canna help thinkin' that this is an unnatural war, in which friends and kindred will plunge their swords into each other. And there are some who would be fighting against us, whose swords I would rather feel pierced through my body, than raise mine against them.'

"'O waes me!' she cried, 'am I to be disgraced—is the Truth to be deserted, by my youngest and dearest—the Benjamin o' my age? Where, laddie—where are a' the precepts I endeavoured to inculcate into you now? But I see hoo it is; it a' arises out o' yer fondness for the dauchter o' that enemy o' oor cause—Robert Stuart! Is there naebody ye can see to like but her? Her faither is a spy and a persecutor, a defender o' the supremacy o' bishops, an advocate o 'the service-book, and an upholder o' the absolute power o' the king. She is o' the same spirit and principles as her father is; and, in that respect, she is more to be commended than ye are, for she has hearkened to the voice of her parents, and has not the sin o' disobedience on her head. Have ye forgot the command, "Be not ye unequally yoked.' Rise, Alexander, I command ye, get ready yer arms, and gae wi' yer faither, yer brothers, and yer mother, to the camp.'

"'Na, na, guidwife,' said her husband—'that maunna be; for liberty o' conscience am I buckling on my sword, and I wunna see the conscience o' my ain bairn suffer wrang. If Alexander winna gang wi' us, a' that I ask o' him is, that he winna draw his sword against the cause in defence o' which his faither and his brothers go forth, ready to lay down their lives, if they be required.'

"'Faither!' cried Alexander, springing up and grasping his hand, 'I will never fight against ye!—never! I stand by your side to the last or die by it, and my arm shall be ready to defend ye! Where you go, I will go!'

"'That is right, Alexander, my man, said his eldest bro-

cher; 'I kenned there was mettle in the callant, and principle too—though I must say that he is rather unpleasantly situated, and I canna say that I would like his case to be my ain.'

"His arms being sought out also, the father and his sons were accoutred and ready to depart, when Alice again said—'We have not yet prepared all that we ought to do. We are but stewards o' the inheritance intrusted to our hands in this world; and to the sacred cause in which ye are about to engage, it is our duty also to contribute liberally from the substance with which we have been blessed. Now, what say ye, guidman—do ye think that we could afford to take to the camp, and present before the general, six sheep, six firlots o' wheat, and six measures o' meal? Hae ye faith to venture sae far?'

"'Alice,' replied he, 'can ye doubt me? If it were necessary, I would consider it my duty not only to part my stock to the last sheep, and wi' my corn to the last firlot—but I would sell the croft also, and part wi' the money, rather than see one who has drawn his sword in defence o' the Covenant and his country want.

"'Ye mak my heart glad,' answered Alice; 'and now let us kneel and give thanks that we have lived to see the day when the armies o' the kirk are gathered together, powerful as those which David led against the Philistines.'

"And Alexander Cockburn and his family raised the voice of thanksgiving, after which they knelt down together, and he prayed aloud. When they arose, each man girded his sword upon his thigh, and the father commanded that a horse should be harnessed, which was laden with the wheat and the meal for the army of the Covenant. The sheep they drove on before them, and Alice accompanied her husband and her sons.

"I must now, however, take notice of Mr Stuart, of whom particular mention was made by Alice, as being an enemy to the Covenant, and a persecutor of its adherents. He was man of considerable substance, and lived about midway between Dunse and Polwarth. His daughter, to whom young Alexander Cockburn was attached, and who his mother cast up to him, was called Flora. She was at that period a bonny oung creature o' eighteen; her hair was like the yellow gowd when the sun shines on't, and her een were a brighter and a safter blue than the sky on a summer morning, when there isna a cloud in a' the heavens. She was tall and gentle-looking, and her waist ye might hae spanned wi' your hand. It was wranging her to ca' her a persecutor; for though she was an advocate for Episcopacy, as her faither had taught her to be, there wasna a sentiment in her heart that could hae wranged a worm.

"Young Alexander and Flora had become very early acquainted wi' each other, and as early intimate. They were yet but bairns in a manner; but, young as they were, they had a happy *langsyne*, on which they could look back, in which they had

> ——'paidel'd in the burn
> And pou'd the gowans fine.

They had been playmates from the time that they could toddle hand in hand thegither; and the hands that they had joined to help each other to run when but infants, they now wished to join for good and a', that they might journey pleasantly together through life. Their hearts had become insensibly twisted around each other, and they had been so long entwined that they had become as one.

"But I must now inform you of the arrival of Alice, her husband, and her sons, at Dunse Law. When they arrived at the camp, Alexander the elder, inquired of one who seemed, by the orders which he was giving, to be an officer or a man in authority, if he could see the general; for the officers in the army of the Covenant wore the plain blue bounet, and the blue ribbon streaming from it, without any distinction from the men in the ranks; and when the men lay upon the bare ground, so did they.

"'Ye seem to come wi' a free-will offering, said the officer; 'and not only wi' an offering o' provision, but, judging by your soldierly array, ye come to fight the battles o' conscience, the Covenant, and our country.'

"'We do,' said the father; 'my five sons and myself, an' these sheep and provisions, are the offerings o' my children's mother; which, my lord, or whatever ye may be, wi' her husband and five sons thrawn into the scale, makes nae sma' sacrifice.'

"'Ye speak truly, worthy friend,' said the officer; 'we rejoice in such devotedness towards our glorious purpose. It is a volunteer cause, and Heaven affords us assurance of victory. Yonder, see ye, is the general riding round the tents on the black horse; go to him before he take up his quarters in the castle for the night—he will give ye a gracious welcome.'

"'Weel, that is very odd,' said the senior Alexander Cockburn, gazing upon the general with a look of surprise. 'He is a wee, auld-looking body. My opinion o' him was, that he would be something like what we understand Sir William Wallace to have been—a man before whom his enemies fled, at the shaking o' his spear.'

"'O Alexander!' said Alice, 'hae ye forgot yoursel' a'thegither, or, rather, hae ye forgot your Bible? Do ye no remember the purposes for which the weak things o' this earth were chosen?'

"'True, Alice,' said he; 'I stand corrected.' And the father, the mother, their armed sons, and the sheep and provisions which they brought with them, were placed before General Leslie.

"'Well, good folk,' inquired the general, 'what would ye wi' me?'

"'We come, sir,' said the elder Cockburn, lifting his bonnet, 'to offer you our best services o' heart and hand, and to—to——'

"Here old Alexander, who, though one o' the most rigid and unbending men o' the Covenant, was withal a man o' singular modesty, and, in some respects, o' bashfulness, began to falter; on which Alice, taking upon herself the office o' speaker, began to say—'Yes, your excellency—that is, your generalship—we are come'——

"But her husband gently pulled her by the sleeve, whispering—'Haud sae, Alice—just let me gang on—ye ken it behoves a woman to be silent, and in an assembly to open not her mouth.'

"Though an obedient and an affectionate wife, this was a point which she probably would have been disposed to argue with him; but the general, interfering, said—'Wi' your good leave, Sir, I shall hear your wife. Scotland owes a debt to its wives and mothers, which, as a nation, they should be proud to acknowledge; they are manifesting a godly enthusiasm, which is far, far beyond the boasted virtue o' the mothers and maidens o' Rome, when they saved their city from destruction. Speak on, good woman.

"Alice, thus emboldened, proceeded—'Weel, Sir, as my husband has said, he and our sons have come to offer you their best services o' heart and hand; and o' the little we can spare, we hae brought ye six sheep, six firlots o' wheat, and six measures o' meal. The latter is but a poor offering; but when, as a wife, I present to ye my husband, and as a mother, my five sons, I trust that what we bring will not be altogether unacceptable; while it shall be my care to provide means at least for their support; so that, if they be not of assistance to ye, they at least shall not be a burden.'

'The old general dismounted, and took Alice by the hand. 'While Scotland can boast o' such wives and mothers as you,' said he—'and I am proud to say there are many such—the enemies o' the Covenant will never be able to prevail against us.

"Alexander Cockburn and his five sons then began to erect a sort o' half hut, half tent, beside those o' the rest o' the army, that they might be always in readiness. And, oh, Sir, at that period, Dunse Law presented one of the grandest sights that ever the eyes o' man were witness to. On the side o' that hill were encamped four and twenty thousand men. Lowest down, lay the tents o' the nobles and the great officers, their tops rising like pyramids; before them were placed forty pieces o' cannon; and between them were the tents o' their captains; and from every captain's tent streamed a broad blue flag, on which was inscribed the words I have already quoted—'FOR CHRIST'S CROWN AND THE COVENANT.' Higher up the hill, were the straw-covered and turf-built huts o' the soldiers: and from the rising o' the sun until its going down, ye wouldna hae heard an oath or a profane expression amongst those four and twenty thousand men; but, on the contrary, hundreds o' the ministers o' the gospel were there, each man with his Bible in his hand, and his sword girt upon his thigh, ready to lead his followers to the battle, or to lay down his life in testimony o' the truth o' the doctrines which he preached. Morning and night there was public worship throughout the camp, and the drum summoned the army to prayers and to hearing the word, while the services were attended by all, from the general down to the humblest recruit that had but newly entered the ranks. At every hour in the day also, from some part o' the camp or other, the sounds o' praise and prayer were heard. Every man in that army was an enthusiast; but he had a glorious cause to excite his enthusiasm—the cause o' his Creator, and his country's liberty—ay, and the liberty, the rights, and privileges o' posterity also. Yes, Sir, I say o' posterity; for it is to those men that we are indebted for the blessings and the freedom which we enjoy beyond the people o' other countries; though there are men who dared to call them *mere fanatics!*—Fanatics, indeed!—but, oh, they are fanatics that saved their country—that braved oppression—that defied it even to death, and that wi' their own blood wrote the irrevocable charter o' our liberty! If they were fanatics, they were such as every nation in the world would be proud to call its sons, and would glory to have possessed. They are fanatics, if they must be called so, whose deeds, whose characters, whose firmness o' purpose, the integrity of whose principles, and whose matchless courage, with the sublime height to which they carried their devotion, despising imprisonment, pain, and death, render us unworthy o' being numbered as their descendants. I canna endure to hear the men, whose graves are the foundations on which are built our civil and religious liberties, so spoken o'; I winna see their graves—I winna hear their memories profaned. More fit we were to set up a national monument in remembrance o' them.

"On the day after the army o' the Covenant encamped on Dunse Law, the King held a grand review o' his army by Tweedside; but just as the review was over—and when the king and his courtiers were retiring to sit down to their wine, and their feast o' fat things, and his poor half-hungered soldiers to kitchen out a broken biscuit, or a piece o' bare bannock, (while the Covenanters were living like gentlemen on wheaten bread and flesh-meat every day,)—some o' the loyalists, that had clearer een than others, observed the great camp upon Dunse Law, and the hundred banners waving in the wind; and ran to communicate what they had observed to the King. Charles, to do him justice, was a canny, silly sort o' a body, but just infatuated wi' his ideas aboot his prerogative—by which he meant absolute power—and his foolish desire to force everybody to swallow a bishop, gown, sleeves, and all! However, when he heard that the 'blue bonnets were bound for the Border,' he spoke angrily and disdainfully to his officers, and upbraided them that they had not brought him tidings o the movements o' his enemies; and, calling for his prospect-glass, he stood upon the bank o' the river—and there, sure enough to his sorrow and consternation, he beheld the camp, and the multitude o' armed men. He even to a nearness counted their numbers. Now, Dunse, as the crow flies, not being quite seven miles to where the Tweed forms the Border line between Ladykirk and Norham, his Majesty spoke o' punishing the Covenanters for having broken the compact that they had entered into not to approach within ten miles—forgetting, be it remembered, that he was the first aggressor, in having sent his troops to attack a party o' the Covenanters at Kelso; and forgetting, also, that his army was unable to stand up, even for a single hour, against the host who stood over against them. He soon, however, became sensible o' his weakness, and he again began to offer liberal and generous terms to his armed subjects; but no sooner did he find them ready to accept them, than his kingly word became like a whuff o' reek that has vanished out o' sight in the air:—ye may seek it, but where will ye find it? The Covenanters were not willing to bathe their swords in the blood o' their fellow-subjects, and the King was feared to measure the strength o' his army against the blue-bonneted host.

"But, as it is not my intention to narrate to ye a history o' the wars o' the Covenant, I shall only say that the King, seeing he had no chance if it came to a battle, consented to summon a parliament, and that everything should be settled as the Covenanters desired. Both armies were accordingly disbanded, and Alexander Cockburn and his five sons returned home to their own house, and laid their weapons aside.'

"'The old man said that 'he trusted the time had come when in this country the sword should be turned into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning-hook.'

"But Alice answered him, saying—'O Alexander! a foolish thing has been done by our rulers. They have got an assurance from the King; but they ought to have made assurance doubly sure. Ye have read, and they must have read—'Put not your trust in princes.' The day is not distant when they will rue that they overlooked that text.'

"'There was too much o' the nature o' prophecy in the words which Alice spoke; for twelve months had not passed, when the mischief-making little churchman, Bishop Laud, and other evil spirits o' a similar stamp, egged up the simple King to break a' the promises he had made to the people o' Scotland, and wi' a strong hand carry war and revenge into the country. But, poor man, he reckoned without his host. His advisers were like the counsellors o' Solomon's son—they advised him to his ruin. The news o' his intention ran through Scotland like wildfire. Beacons burned on the mountains—men gathered on the plains—and before the King was in readiness to leave London, all Scotland was in arms. Old Leslie was once more chosen commander-in-chief; and the same valiant men that the year before had encamped upon Dunse Law, gathered together, and marched towards the Borders.

"'They had reached Chousely, which is between three and four miles west o' Dunse, when Alexander Cockburn and his sons again joined them, and brought with them an offering of provisions, as before. The general again remembered and welcomed them; and he recollected them the more readily, because Alice accompanied them. On the following morning, when the army began to march towards the south, she took her leave of them, saying—'Fareweel, husband! bairns!—to the protection o' Him whose battles ye go forth to fight, I resign ye. Pray ye, that whate'er betide, I may be strengthened to bow my head, and say, '*His will be done!*' Go, then, acquit yoursels valiantly; think on the sacred cause in which ye are engaged, and trust in the Hand that will sustain ye. Bairns, fareweel!—your mother blesses you!—

ehe will pray for you! Husband, fareweel!—look after our bairns. Alexander! ye are the youngling o' my flock; and, oh, hinny, my heart yearns for ye, lest ye permit unworthy thoughts to arise in yer breast, that may deprive yer young arm o' its strength.'

"'Fear not for me, mother,' replied the youth.

"She, therefore, returned home; and they proceeded wi' the army towards Coldstream, from whence they crossed the Tweed, and proceeded, by way o' Wooler and Longframlington, towards Newcastle, of which town they came within sight on the tenth day after entering Northumberland; but, finding Newcastle strongly fortified and garrisoned by the King's troops, under General Conway, they proceeded a few miles up the Tyne to Newburn, where the civil war in reality began, and the first battle was fought.

"When the King's troopers heard that the Covenanters were encamped at Newburn, they galloped out o' Newcastle, sword in hand; each man swearing lustily that he would kill a dozen o' the blue-bonneted Jockies—as they called the Covenanters in derision—and boasting that they would make prisoners o' all who escaped the sword. But when the inhabitants o' the canny toon heard the braggadocio o' the red-coats, as they galloped through the streets, flourishing their swords—'Dinna brag tow fast, lads,' said they, shaking their heads; 'words arena deeds; and tak care that each ane o' ye doesna catch a Tartar.'

"Next morning, the battle o' Newburn was fought; and the tone o' the King's soldiers was indeed lowered. They were routed at every point, they ran to and fro in confusion, and their panic was like a whirlwind in a barn-yard. 'The road to Durham!—shew us, shew us the road to Durham!' they cried; and, helter-skelter, neck-or-nought, leaving swords, pistols, carbines, muskets, everything they could throw away, by the roadside, away to Durham, and far beyond it, they ran.

"Only five o' the army o' the Covenant were left dead on the field; but among those five was old Alexander Cockburn, the husband of Alice. After the battle, his sons found his mangled and lifeless body in a narrow lane, between two gardens, surrounded by a heap of dead Loyalists, who had sunk beneath his sword before he fell.

"It is said that the first blow is half the battle; and it was so wi' the Covenanters upon this occasion: their sudden victory at Newburn not only struck dismay into the hearts o' the royal troops, but reason and fear baith began to whisper their warnings in the ears o' the monarch. He once more became a negotiator and seeker for peace with his thrice-cheated and injured subjects. They remembered the divine precept, to forgive their brother though he offended against them seven times in a day, and they kept this commandment before their eyes in all their dealings with the King. They forgave him his lack o' faith, and the hollowness o' his promises; and, extending to him the right hand o' allegiance, he once more gave his kingly pledge to grant them all that they desired, and to ratify it by the acts o' a Parliament. Puir man! he had long been baith King and Parliament in his ain person; and he conceived that in him dwelt absolute power, and absolute wisdom; but little did he dree what a dear Parliament the ane that he then spoke o' was to be to him. It is distinguished by the emphatic appellation o' 'THE PARLIAMENT' even unto this day; and by that designation it will continue to be known. Thus the arms and the cause o' the Covenant again triumphed; and, the objects for which the army took the field being accomplished, they were dismissed, and returned every man to his own house.

"With afflicted hearts—while they rejoiced at the accomplishment o' the object for which they had taken up arms—the five sons o' Alice Cockburn returned to Dunse. She was yet ignorant o' her husband's death; and having been informed o' their approach, she met them at the door. She stretched out her arms to welcome them; but they fell, as if suddenly stricken wi' palsy, by her side; and wi' a trembling voice, and a look that bespoke her forebodings, she inquired—'Where is *he?*'

"They looked sadly one towards another, as if each were anxious that the other should communicate the tidings. Her eldest son took her hand, and said mournfully—'Come into the house, mother.'

"Their sorrowfu' looks, their dejected manner, told her but too plainly her husband's fate.

"'He is dead!' she cried, in a tone o' heart-piercing solitariness and sorrow, as she accompanied them into the house, where she had beheld them equip themselves for battle.

"'My faither is dead,' said Alexander, her youngest; 'but he died bravely, mother, in the cause in which ye glory, and in which a' Scotland glories; and, to the deeds done by his hand on the day he fell, we, in a great measure, owe the freedom o' our country, and the security o' the Covenant.'

"She clasped her hands together, and sat down and wept.

"'Mother,' said her sons, gathering round her, 'dinna mourn.'

"She rose, she wept upon their necks, from the eldest to the youngest—'Ye hae lost a faither,' said she, 'whose loss to ye nane but thae wha kenned him at his ain fireside can estimate; and I hae lost a husband, who, for eight an' thirty years, has been dearer to me than the licht o' the sun; for, wherever he was, there was aye sunlicht upon my heart. But his life has been laid down in a cause worthy o' the first martyrs. I hae endeavoured to pray—"THY will be done;" and pray for me, bairns, that I may submit to that will without repining, for the stroke is heavy, and nature weak.'

"Again she sat down and wept, and now she lifted her hands in prayer, and again she wrung them in the breavement o' widowhood, saying—'O my Alexander!—my husband!—shall I never, never see ye again?' And her sons gathered round her, to comfort her.

"On the day following, Alexander, the youngest o' the sons o' Alice, went towards Polwarth, in the hope of obtaining an interview with Flora Stuart, whom he had not seen for several months; for, from the time that he had joined the Covenanting army on Dunse Law, her father had forbidden him his house. He spoke of him as the young traitor, and forbade Flora, at her peril, to speak to him again. But, as the sang says—

'Love will venture in where it darna weel be seen;

and Alexander again ventured to see her whose image was for ever present wi' his thoughts, as if her portrait were engraven on his heart. It was about the back end o' harvest, and the full moon was shining bright upon the stubble fields and the brown hills; he was passing by Chousely, (or, as some call it, Choicelee,) the very place where his father, his brothers and himself, had last joined the army o' the Covenant; when he observed a figure tripping along the road before him. One glance was sufficient. He knew it was she whom he sought—his own Flora. He ran forward.

"'Flora!' he cried; 'stop, dear—stop—it is me!'

"She turned round and said—'Sir!'

"The cold abruptness of that word, 'Sir!' was like a dagger driven through his bosom; and, for a moment, he stood before her in silence and confusion, as one who has been detected of some offence. But true affection is never long either in finding words or an equivalent for them.

"'Flora,' said he, holding out his hand, 'it is long since we met; I hae suffered affliction since then, and encountered danger, and considering the long, long friendship—the more than friendship, Flora—that has been between us, and the vows we have exchanged wi' each other, I think I micht have expected something mair frae ye now than—'Sir! Is

your heart changed, Flora—hae ye forgot me—or do ye wish to forget me?

"'No, Alexander,' said she, 'I have not forgotten ye; nor hae I forgotten the vows that have passed between us, as my unhappy heart is a secret witness; and if I did wish to forget ye, it wouldna be possible. For, wherever I micht be, the remembrance o' you would come o'er my thoughts, like the shadow o' a cloud passing across a river.'

"'And after it had passed, would it leave as little impression upon your heart, Flora, as the shadow o' a cloud does upon a river.'

"'Alexander,' she replied, 'I am not gaun to argue wi' ye, for I canna. But, oh, man, ye hae drawn your sword against your King—ye hae fought against him, ye hae been a traitor in the land that gave ye birth; and, as my faither says, they who are rebellious subjects will never mak good husbands, or be regulated by the ties o' domestic life.'

"'Flora,' returned he, 'I deny altogether that what your faither says is correct. But, even allowing that it were, I deny that I hae taken up arms against my King, or that I am a rebellious subject. We took up arms against injustice, tyranny, and oppression; and the king had previously taken up arms against us. Look at the whole conduct o' the Covenant army—hae they not always listened to every proposal o' the King, and trusted to his royal word, as faithful subjects who were wishful to prove their attachment to his throne and person? But where can ye point out the instance that he has not fled from his engagement and deceived us, and shewed us that his promises and his pledges were not stronger than burned straw? Even the last engagement which he has made, and by which he is to secure to us the rights we have sought for, prayed for, fought for, I believe he will break—he will try to evade it, and give us vengeance in its stead—and if he does so, I am no longer his subject but his enemy, even though it be at the sacrifice o' you, Flora; and rather than part wi' you, were it in my power, I would ten thousand times lay down my own life.'

"'Alexander,' added she, 'I haena forgotten the days when we were happy thegither, and when we neither thought o' kings nor o' onything else, but our twa sels. But now my faither forbids me to speak to ye; and I maun obey him. And though I think that, in the principles ye are following, ye are wrong, very wrong—yet, Alexander, be ye rebel, be ye what you will, there shall never be another name but yours dear to my heart—though we ne'er meet again.'

"'Dinna meet again, dearest!' cried he; 'we will meet—we shall meet!—we shall be happy too! Never talk o' no meeting again.' And they clung around each others necks and wept.

"They wandered lang backward and forward, forgetting how the hours flew during their long, fond whispers; and Flora's father, attended by a servant man, came forth to seek her. He vehemently upbraided and threatened his daughter, and he as vehemently reviled Alexander. He called him by names that I couldna mention, and that he bore patiently; but he also spoke disrespectfully o' his mother—he heaped insults on the memory o' his dead father. Alexander could endure no more; he sprang forward, he grasped him by the throat. He placed his hand upon his sword which he still wore, and exclaimed—'Sir! there is a point to all endurance, and you have passed it!"

"Flora rushed forward, she placed her hand on Alexander's arm—'Forbear!—what would you do?' she cried; 'it is my father!'

"'Nothing!' he replied calmly, yet sternly; 'I would do nothing; I have borne much provocation, and acted rashly—for which rashness, forgie me, Flora. When I first drew my sword to resist oppression, I vowed that should I meet one that was dear to you in the ranks o' the oppressor, though his sword should pierce my body, mine should not be raised against him. Fareweel, dearest—happier days may come.

"Four years had not passed, when the Covenanters found that they had but small cause to be satisfied wi' the promises and assurances o' the King. Provoked by his exactions, and his attempts at despotism, the people o' England had taken up arms against him. Montrose, who had been one o' the leaders o' the Covenant party, though a man possessed o wonderful military talents, was to the full as ambitious as he was clever,; and he hadna principle enough to withstand royal promises, smiles, and flattery; he therefore turned traitor to the cause in which he had at first embarked, and he turned the arms o' his Highlanders, and a body o' fierce Irishmen, against the men whom, three years before, he had led to battle. Again, many o' the Covenanters rushed to arms, and amongst them, the sons o' Alice Cockburn.

"They served as musketeers under Sir James Scott, and fought side by side at the battle o' Tippermuir. When, through the treachery o' some, and the want o' management in others, the Covenanters were put to flight, the little band o musketeers, seeking refuge in some ruined buildings, kept up an incessant fire upon the forces o' Montrose, as if resolved to sell their lives at the dearest price. Montrose, after many efforts, finding that they would not surrender, put himself at the head o' a powerful body o' Atholmen, and rushed upon the gallant band, who defended themselves like lions at bay. O' the five brothers, who fought side by side, four fell; and the youngest only was left, like a servant o' Job of old, to tell the tidings. When Alexander beheld the dead bodies o' his brothers lying around him, sorrow and revenge raged in his breast together. His fury became as the fury o' a tiger that is robbed o' its young. He dashed into the midst o' his enemies—he pressed forward to where Montrose was crying, 'Vengeance! vengeance!'—he reached him—they engaged hand to hand. Montrose was pressed against a wall o' the ruins.

"'Fause traitor! renegade!' exclaimed Alexander—'here shall I die, the avenger o' my country and my brothers' blood!'

"His sword was uplifted to strike, when a body o' Atholmen, rushing to the rescue of their commander, the sword was shivered in Alexander's hand, and he was made prisoner.

"Several who had heard the words which he had applied to their leader, and had seen his hand raised against his life, insisted that his punishment should be death; and, in justification o' their demand, they urged the threat o' the Covenanters to do the same by whosoever Montrose might send to treat wi' them.

"A sort o' court-martial was accordingly held; and the fettered prisoner was brought forth before a tribunal who had already agreed upon his sentence. He, however, looked his judges boldly in the face. His cheeks were not blanched, nor did his lips move with fear; he heard the charges read against him—the epithets that had been applied to Montrose, who was the King's representative—and that he had raised his sword against his life. He daringly admitted his having applied the epithets—he repeated them again; and, raising his clenched and fettered hands in the face o' his judges, he justified what he had said; and he regretted that his sword had been broken in his hand before it had accomplished the deed which he desired.

"Montrose drew his brows together, and glanced upon him sternly; but the young prisoner met his gaze with a look of scorn.

"'Away with him,' said his judges; 'to-morrow, let him be brought forth for execution. His fate shall be an example to all rebels.'

"During the night which he had heard to be pronounced the last o' his existence, and throughout which he heard the heavy tramp o' the sentinel pacing before the place of his confinement—he mourned not for his own fate; but the tears ran down his cheeks when he thought o' his poor, widowed, desolate, and unfriended mother!

"'Oh, who,' he exclaimed, 'who will tell her that her bairns are wi' the dead!—that there is not one left, from the auldest to the youngest!—but that her husband and her sons are gone!—a' gone?—My mother!—my poor mother!" Then he would pause—strike his hand upon his bosom—lean his brow against the wall o' the apartment, and raising it again, say—'And Flora, too, my ain betrothed!—who will tell, who will comfort her? Her faither may bear the tidings to her; but there will be nae sympathy for me in his words, nae compassion for her sorrow. Oh, could I only have seen her before I died—had there been ony ane by whom I could hae sent her some token o' my remembrance in death, I would hae bared my breast to the muskets that are to destroy me, without regret. But to die in the manner I am to do, and not three and twenty yet! Oh, what will my poor Flora say?'

"Then folding his arms in wretchedness, he threw himself upon the straw which had been spread as a bed for his last night's repose.

"Early on the following day he was brought forth for execution. Hundreds o' armed men attended as spectators o' the scene; and, as he was passing through the midst o' them, he started, as he approached one o' them, who stood near to Montrose, and he exclaimed—'Mr Stuart!'

"He stood still for a few moments, and approaching the person whose appearance had startled him—'Mr Stuart,' he added, 'ye hae long regarded me as an enemy, and as a destroyer o' your peace; but, as one the very minutes o' whose existence are numbered—and as one for whom ye once professed to hae a regard—I would make one sma' request to ye—a dying request—and that is, that ye would take this watch, which is all I hae to leave, and present it to your daughter, my ain betrothed Flora, as the last bequest and token o' remembrance o' him to whom her first, her only vow was plighted.'

"It was indeed the father o' Flora he addressed, whose loyalty had induced him to take up arms with Montrose; but he turned away his head, and waved back his hand, as Alexander addressed him, as though he knew him not.

"Montrose heard the words which the prisoner had spoken, and, approaching Mr Stuart, he said—'Sir, our young prisoner seems to know ye—yea, by his words, it seems that ye were likely to be more than friends. Fear not to countenance him; if ye can urge aught in his favour—yea, for the services ye have rendered, if ye desire that he should be pardoned—speak but the word, and he shall be pardoned. Montrose has said it.'

"'My lord,' said Stuart, 'I will not stand in the way o' justice—I would not to save a brother! I have nothing to say for the young man.'

"And as he turned away, he muttered, loud enough to be heard—'Let him meet his appointed doom, and ye will extinguish the last o' a race o' incorrigible rebels.'

"'Youth,' said Montrose, addressing Alexander, 'from the manner in which ye addressed Mr Stuart, and the way in which he has answered my inquiries respecting ye, it is evident to me that the turbulent spirit o' the times has begotten a feeling between ye, which ought not to exist; and through your quarrel, the heart o' a gentle maiden may be broken. But I shall have no part in it. I think,' he added in a lower tone, 'I have seen your face before. When the lot fell upon me to be the first to cross the Tweed at Hirselhaugh into England, are ye not the stripling that was the first to follow me?'

"'I am,' replied Alexander; 'but what signifies that, my lord—*ye have since crossed the water in an opposite direction!*'

"Montrose frowned for a moment; but his better nature forced him to admire the heroism of his prisoner; and he added—'Consent to leave the rebellious cause into which you have plunged—embrace the service of your king, and you are pardoned—you shall be promoted—the hand of the maiden whom you love shall be yours!—I will be surety for what I have said.'

"Alexander remained silent for a few minutes, as though there were a struggle in his bosom what he should say; at length, turning his eyes towards Montrose, he answered—'What, my lord! turn renegade, like you!—desert the cause for which my father and my brethren have laid down their lives! Wi' all the offers which ye hold out—and tempting one o' them is—I scorn life at such a price. Let them lead me to execution; and I have but one request to make to ye. Ye have heard the favour which I besought o' that man, and which he refused to grant'—as he spoke he pointed to the father of Flora—'ye will inform his daughter that Alexander Cockburn met death as became a man—that his last thoughts were o' her—that his last breath breathed her name!'

"'You shall not die!' exclaimed Montrose, impatiently; 'I will not so far gratify your pride. Conduct him to Perth,' added he, addressing those who guarded the prisoner; 'and let him be held in safe keeping till our further pleasure is known concerning him.'

"He had admired the dauntless spirit which young Cockburn displayed, and he sought not his life, but he resolved, if it were possible, to engage him in his service.

"For many weeks, Alexander remained as a prisoner in Perth, without hope of rescue, and without being able to learn which cause prevailed—the King, the Parliament, or the Covenant—for the civil war was now carried on by three parties. At length, by daily rubbing the iron bars o' his prison window wi' some sort o' soap, which he contrived to get, they became so corroded, that the stanchels yielded to his hands as rotten wood. He tore the blankets that covered him into ribbons, and fastening them to a portion o' one o' the broken bars, lowered himself to the street.

"It was night, and he fled to the quay—and found concealment in the hold of a vessel, which, on the following day, sailed for London.

"But it is time to return to Alice—the widowed, the all but childless mother. Day after day she prayed, she yearned, that she might obtain tidings of her children; but no tidings came. Sleep forsook her solitary pillow, and, like Rachel, she wept for her children because they were not. But a messenger of evil at length arrived, bearing intelligence that four of her sons had fallen in battle, and that the fifth, her youngest, had been made prisoner, and was sentenced to die.

"'My cup o' wretchedness is full, cried the bereaved mother; 'have I none left—not one—not even my Alexander, my youngest—the comfort o' my age? But I must submit. It is for the best—it is a' for the best, or it wadna be. I should rejoice that I hae been chastened, and that my affliction has been for a cause that will confer liberty o' conscience on posterity, and freedom on our poor distracted country. But, oh, I canna forget, my heart winna do it, that I was once a wife—that I was a mother—and had five sons, the marrow o' whom ye wouldna hae found in a' the Merse; but now my husband is not, and my bairns are not, and I am a lone widow, wearying to be wi' them, and wi' no ane here to speak to me! Yet I ought not to murmur!—no! no! It was me that urged them to go forth and fight the good fight; but, strong as my zeal then was—oh, human nature, and a wife's, a mother's feelings, are strong also.'

"But Alice, in the day o' her distress found a comforter, and one that sympathised wi' her in all her sorrows, in one whom she had but small right to expect to be a friend. When she was left to mourn in solitude, wi' but few to visit her, there was one who came to condole wi' her, and who, having once visited her, was seldom absent from her side—and that was Flora Stuart, the betrothed o' her youngest son, o' whom she had spoken rashly.

"'O bairn!' said she, addressing Flora, 'little, little indeed, does Alice Cockburn deserve at yer hands:—for

but for me, and my puir Alexander might this day hae been in life, and held yer hand in his. But, forgie me, hinny! It was in a guid cause that I hae sacrificed a' that was dear to me in this warld—only, it was a sair, sair stroke upon a mother!'

"Flora strove to comfort her; but it was in vain. She didna repine, neither did she murmur as those who have no hope; but her health, which had never been what doctors would call robust, was unable to stand the shock which her feelings had met wi'; and, in a few weeks, after hearing o' the deaths o' her children, Alice Cockburn was gathered wi' the dead, and Flora Stuart accompanied her body mourning to the grave.

"I have mentioned that Alexander concealed himself on board a vessel which sailed for London. He had been three days at sea before he ventured from the place o' his concealment, and the captain himself being the son o' a Covenanter, he was conveyed to the great city in safety. He had been but a short time in London, when, meeting with a gentleman who belonged to the neighbourhood o' Dunse, he learned that his mother was dead, and that his father's brother, believing that he was dead also, had taken possession o' the property.

"Alexander had never had the same religious feelings in the cause in which he had been engaged, that his father and his brothers had. He fought for the sake of what he called liberty, rather than for any feeling o' conscience; and his ruling passion was a love o' warlike adventures. He, therefore, had been but a short time in London, when he joined the parliamentary army; and his courage and talents soon drew upon him the notice o' Cromwell, and others o' the parliamentary leaders.

"It was about six years after the battle o' Tippermuir, when one, who was supposed to be a spy from the royalists, fell into the hands o' a party belonging to the parliamentary army. He was examined, and evidence bearing strongly against him, that he had come amongst them secretly to pry out where the army would be most vulnerable, and, if possible, to entrap them into the hands o' their enemies, was produced against him. He was examined a second time, and letters were found concealed about his person which left no doubt o' his being a spy. Some voted that he should be immediately punished with death; but, while all agreed in the nature o' the punishment that ought to be inflicted, there were some who proposed that the execution o' his sentence should be deferred for a few days, until the arrival o' their commanding officer, who was then absent.

"During the days that he was thus respited, a daughter o' the spy arrived, and flinging herself upon her knees before the officers who had condemned him, she besought them, with tears, that they would spare her father's life. Her distress might have moved a heart o' stone. Before them they beheld youth, beauty, loveliness, bathed in misery—bowed down wi' distress. They saw her tears falling at their feet—but they had been used to tears o' blood, and her wretchedness moved them not. All that they would say to her was, that their superior officer was not present, and, with the evidence which they had to submit before him, they could not revoke the sentence they had passed.

"On the third day, the chief officer o' the party arrived. All that had been proved against the prisoner was told to him, and the papers that had been concealed about him were placed before him. He was about to pronounce the words—

"'He shall surely die!' when, pausing, he commanded that the prisoner should be brought before him.

"The doomed one was accordingly ushered into his presence. When the officer beheld him approach, he started up—Can it be possible!' he exclaimed—"Mr Stuart!' and gasped as he spoke.

"The prisoner also started at hearing his true name, and raising his head, said 'It is possible! Alexander Cockburn, I am your prisoner—*It is your turn now!*'

"The officer, who was chief in command o' the party, was none other than Alexander Cockburn, the young Covenanter, and the doomed spy was Mr Robert Stuart, the father of Flora.

"'Sir,' said Alexander, 'my turn is indeed come—it is come to prove to you, that as generous feelings may kindle in the eyes that are barely shaded by the blue bonnet o' a Covenanter, as in those that look proudly from beneath the gay beaver o' a Cavalier. There was a time when I stood as you were like to have done now, wi' but a few ticks o' a watch between me and eternity—the watch that ye refused to take from my hand; and when but the expression o' a wish from your lips was all that was required to obtain my pardon, my freedom—and that wish ye wouldna express.'

"'I ken it, lad! I ken it!' cried the prisoner; 'but I am in your power now; take your revenge—do by me as I would have done by you!'

"'No, Mr Stuart!' replied the other—'vengeance belongs not to me. But I rejoice that, in this instance, for the sake o' one whose name I may not mention here, I have the power o' pardoning. Soldiers, unloose his hands—he is free—he is forgiven.'

"The soldiers did as they were commanded.

"'Alexander Cockburn!' exclaimed the late captive, 'will you make me appear more contemptible than a worm in my own eyes? A minute has not passed since you reminded me how I hated you, and how deadly I shewed my hatred. The remembrance of the occasion on which I shewed that feeling has been like a biting adder in my breast ever since; and now to receive life at your hands would be to make my future existence a mixture of wormwood and gall.'

"'Say not so,' said Alexander, stepping forward and taking his hand. 'I would speak with you in private.'

"At that moment, a voice was heard without, crying—'Let me pass!—pray, let me pass!—let a daughter intercede with your officer for the life of a father!'

"'Sir! sir!' exclaimed Alexander—'it is *her!* it is *her!*—my Flora's voice!' And he rushed to the door to meet her.

"'Flora!—my own Flora!' he continued—'your father is free!—he is forgiven!—he shall live! What! do you not know me? I am your own Alexander!'

"'Alexander!' she cried, springing forward to meet him; and, yielding to the natural feelings o' the man, her father ran towards them and embraced them both.

"My story, said the old schoolmaster, is now at a close. Alexander gave up his commission in the parliamentary army. It was low-water mark wi' the king's people, and Mr Stuart accompanied him; and, need I tell ye, that so did Flora. They had abundance to keep them comfortable; and, on the day after they arrived at Dunse, she took them to the kirkyard, and shewed them a clean, white headstone o' Alice Cockburn.

"'Bless ye for this, my ain wife,' said Alexander, while the tears were in his een, and he raised her hand to his lips.

"I have only to add, (continued the narrator,) that I, Simon Cockburn, am the great-grandson o' Alexander Cockburn and Flora Stuart."

WILSONS

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE UNKNOWN.

In the year 1785, a young and beautiful woman, whose dress and features bespoke her to be a native of Spain, was observed a few miles beyond Ponteland, on the road which leads to Rothbury. She appeared faint and weary; dimness was deepening over the lustre of her dark eyes, and their glance bespoke anxious misery. Her raiment was of the finest silk; but time had caused its colour to fade; and it hung around her a tattered robe—an ensign of present poverty and wretchedness, a ruined remnant of prouder days that were past. She walked feebly and slowly along, bearing in her arms an infant boy; and she was observed, at intervals, to sit down, press her pale lips to her child's cheek, and weep. Several peasants, who were returning from their labours in the fields, stood and spoke to her; but she gazed on them with wild looks of despair, and she answered them in a strange language, which they did not understand.

"She has been a lady, poor thing," said some of them.

"Ha!" said others, who had less charity in their breasts, 'they have not all been ladies that wear tattered silk in strange fashions."

Some inquired at her if she were hungry; if she wanted a lodging; or where she was going. But, like the mother of Thomas-a-Beckett, to all their inquiries she answered them but in one word that they understood, and that word was "*Edinburgh!*"

Some said, "The poor creature is crazed;" and when she perceived that they comprehended her not, she waved her hand, impatiently, for them to depart, and pressing her child closer to her bosom, she bent her head over him and sighed. The peasants, believing from her gestures that she desired not their presence, left her, some pitying, all wondering. Within an hour, some of them returned to the place where they had seen her, with the intent of offering her shelter for the night; but she was not to be found.

On the following morning, one Peter Thornton, a farmer, went into his stackyard before his servants were astir, and his attention being aroused by the weeping and wailing of a child, he hastened toward the spot from whence the sound proceeded. In a secluded corner of the yard, he beheld a woman lying, as if asleep, upon some loose straw; and a child was weeping and uttering strange sounds of lamentation on her bosom. It was the lovely, but wretched-looking foreigner whom the peasants had seen on the evening before. Peter was a blunt, kind-hearted Englishman: he resembled a piece of rich, though unpolished metal. He approached the forlorn stranger; and her strange dress, her youth, the stamp of misery that surrounded her, and the death-like expression of her features, moved him, as he gazed upon her and her child, almost to tears

"Get up, woman," said he; "why do you lie there? Get up, and come wi' me; ye seem to be ill, and my wife will get ye something comfortable."

But she spoke not, she moved not, though the child screamed louder at his presence. He called to her again; but still she remained motionless.

"Preserve us!" said he, somewhat alarmed, "what can have come owre the woman? I daresay she is in a trance! She sleeps sounder there in the open air, and upon the bare straw, wi' her poor bairn crying like to break its heart upon her breast, than I could do on a feather bed, wi' everything peace and quietness around me. Come, waken, woman!" he added; and he bent down and took her by the hand. But her fingers were stiff and cold—there was no sign of life upon her lips, neither was there breath in her nostrils.

"What is this!" exclaimed Peter, in a tone of horror—"a dead woman in my stackyard!—has there been murder at my door through the night? I'll gie all that I am worth as a reward to find it out!" And leaving the child screaming by the side of its dead mother, he rushed breathless into the house, exclaiming—"O wife! wife!—Jenny, woman!—I say, Jenny! get up! Here has been bloody wark at our door! What do ye think!—a dead woman lying in our stackyard, wi' a bonny bairn screaming on her breast!"

"What's that ye say, Peter!" cried his wife, starting up in terror; "a dead woman!—ye're dreaming—ye're not in earnest!"

"Haste ye! haste ye, Jenny!" he added; "it's as true as that my name is Peter Thornton."

She arose, and, with their household servants, accompanied him to where the dead body lay.

"Now," added Peter, with a look which bespoke the troubled state of his feelings, "this will be a job for the crowner, an' we'll a' have to be examined and cross-examined backward and forward, just as if we had killed the woman or had anything to do wi' her death. I would rather have lost five hundred pounds, than that she had been found dead upon my stackyard."

"But, see," said Jenny, after she had ascertained that the mother was really dead, and as she took up the child in her arms and kissed it—"see, what a sweet, bonny, innocent-looking creature this is!—And, poor thing, only to think that it should be left an orphan, and apparently in a foreign land, for I dinna understand a word that it greets and says."

A coroner's inquest was accordingly held upon the body and a verdict of "*Found dead*" returned. Nothing was discovered about the person of the deceased, which could throw light upon who she was. All the money she had had with her consisted of a small Spanish coin; but on her hand she wore a gemmed ring, of curious workmanship and considerable value, and also a plain marriage-ring. On the inside of the former, were engraven the characters of C. F. *et* M. V.; and, within the latter, C. *et* M. F. The fashion of her dress was Spanish, and the few words of lamentation which her poor child could imperfectly utter, were discovered to be in that language. There being small likelihood of discovering who the stranger had been, her orphan boy was about to be committed to the workhouse; but Mrs Thornton had no children of her own, the motherless little one had been three days under her care, and already her heart began to feel for him a mother's fondness.

"Peter," said she, unto her husband, "I am not happy at the thought o' this poor bairn being sent to the workhouse. I'm sure he was born above such a condition. Death, in taking his mother, left him helpless and crying for help at our door, and I think it would be unnatural in us to withhold it. Now, as we have nae family o' our own, if ye'll bear the expense, I'm sure I'm willing to take the trouble o bringing him up."

"Wi' a' my heart, Jenny, my dow," said Peter; "it was me that found the bairn, and if ye say, keep it, I say, keep it too.

His meat will never be missed; and it will be a worse year wi' us than ony we hae seen, when we canna get claes to his back."

"Peter," replied she, "I always said ye had a good heart; and, by this action, ye prove it to the world."

"I care not that!" said he, snapping the nail of his thumb upwards from his forefinger "what the world may say or think about me, provided *you* and my conscience say that it is right that I hae done."

They, therefore, from that hour, took the orphan as the child of their adoption; and they were most puzzled to decide by what name he should be called.

"It is perfectly evident to me," said the farmer, 'from the letters on the rings, that his faither's first name has begun wi' a C, and his second wi' an F; but we could never be able to find out the outlandish foreign words that they may stand for. We shall, therefore, just give him some decent Christian name."

"And what name more decent or respectable could we gie him than our own?" said Jenny. "Suppose we just call him Thornton—Peter Thornton?"

"No, no, goodwife," said he, "there must two words go to the making o' that bargain; for though nobody would charge you wi' being his mother, the time may come when folk would be wicked enough to hint that I was his faither; therefore, I do not think it proper that he should take my name. What say ye now, as it is probable that his faither's name begun with a C, if we were to call him Christopher; and as we found him in the month of May, we should gie him a surname after the month, and call him Christopher May. That, in my opinion, is a very bonny name; and I hae nae doubt that, if he be spared till those dark een o' his begin to look after the lasses, mony a ane o' them will be o' the same way o' thinking."

The child soon became reconciled to the change in his situation, and returned the kindness of his foster-mother with affection. She rejoiced as he gradually forgot the few words of Spanish which he at first lisped, and in their stead began to speak the language of the Borders. With delight in her eyes, she declared that "she had learned him his *mother tongue*, which he now spoke as *natural as life*, though, when she took him under her care, he could say nothing but some heathenish kind o' sounds, which nobody could make any more sense o', than it was possible to do out o' the yammerin' o' an infant o' six months old."

As the orphan grew up, he became noted as the liveliest boy in the neighbourhood. He was the tallest of his age, and the most fearless. About three years after Peter Thornton had taken him under his protection, he sent him to school. But, lively as the orphan Christopher May was, (for so we shall now call him,) he by no means shewed an aptness to learn. For five years, and he never rose higher than the middle of the class. The teacher was often wroth with the thoughtlessness of his pupil; and in his displeasure said —"It is nonsense, sirrah, to say that ye was ever a Spaniard. There is something like sense and stability o' character about the people o' Spain—but you—ye're a Frenchman!—a thoughtless, dancing, settle-to-nothing fool. Or, if ever ye were a Spaniard, ye belong to the family o' Don Quixote; his name would be found in the catalogue o' your great grandfathers." Even Peter Thornton, though no scholar, was grieved when the teacher called upon him, and complained of the giddiness of his adopted son, and of the little progress which he made under his care.

"Christie, ye rascal ye," said Peter, stamping his foot, what news are these your master tells o' ye? He says he's ashamed o' ye, and that ye'll never learn."

But even for his thoughtlessness, the kind heart of Jenny found an excuse.

"Dear me, goodman," said she, "I wonder to hear the maister and ye talk; I am surprised that both o' ye haena more sense. Do ye not take into consideration that the bairn is learning in a foreign language? Had his mother lived, he would hae spoken Spanish; and how can ye expect him to be as glib at the English language as those that were learned —born I may say—to speak it from the breast?"

"True, Jenny," answered Peter, sagely, "I wasna thinking o' that; but there may be something in't. Maister," added he, addressing the teacher, "ye mustna, therefore, be owre hard wi' the laddie. He is a fine bairn, though he may be dull—and dull I canna think it possible he could be, if he would determine to learn."

Christopher, however, was as wild on the play-ground as he was dull or thoughtless in the school-room. Every person admired the happy-hearted orphan. Good Jenny Thornton said that he had been a great comfort to her; and that all the care she had taken over him was more than repaid by the kindness and gratitude of his heart. They were evident in all he said, and all that he did. Peter also loved the boy; he said "Kit was an excellent laddie—for his part, indeed, he never saw his equal. He had now brought him up for nine years, and he could safely say that he never had occasion to raise a hand to him—indeed he did not remember the time that ever he had had occasion to speak an angry word to him; and he declared that he should inherit all that he possessed, as though he had been his own son."

Mrs Thornton often shewed to him the rings which had been taken from his mother's fingers, with the inscriptions thereon; and on such occasions she would say—"Weel do I remember, hinny, when our goodman came running into the house one morning, shaking as though he had seen an apparition atmidnight, and crying to me, quite out o' breath—'Rise—rise, Jenny!—here is the dead body o' a woman in our stackyard!' I canna tell ye what my feelings were when he said so. I wished not to believe him. But had I wakened, and found myself in a grave, I could not have gotten a greater fright. My heart louped to my throat, just as if it had gotten a sudden jirk with a person's whole might and strength! I dinna ken how I got my gown thrown on, for my teeth were chattering in my head—I shaked liked a 'natomy! And when we did get to the stackyard, there was ye, like a dear wee lammie, mourning owre the breast o' yer dead mother, wi' yer bits o' handies pulling impatiently at yer bonny black hair, kissing her cold lips, or pulling her by the gown, and crying and uttering words which we didna understand. And, oh, hinny, but your mother had been a weel-faured woman in her day!—I never saw her but a cold corpse, and I thought, even then, that I had never looked upon a bonnier face. She had evidently been a genteel person, but was sore, sore dejected. But she had two rings upon her fingers; one of them was a ring such as married women wear—the other was set wi' precious stones, which those who have seen them say, none but a duchess in this country could wear. Ye must examine them."—And here Mrs Thornton was in the habit of producing the rings which she had carefully locked away, wrapped up in twenty folds of paper, and secured in a housewife which folded together within all. Then she would point out to him the initial letters, the C. F. and the M. V., and would add, "That has been your faither and your mother's name when they were sweethearts—at least so our Peter says, (and he is seldom wrong;) but the little *e t* between them—I canna think what it stands for. O Christopher, my canny laddie, it is a pity but that ye would only endeavour to be a scholar, as ye are good otherwise, and then ye might be able to tell what the *e t* means. Who kens but it may throw some light upon your parentage; for, if ever ye discover who your parents were, it will be through the instrumentality o' these rings. Peter always says that, (and, as I say, he is seldom wrong,) and therefore I always keep them locked away, lest onything should come owre them; and when they are out o' the drawer, I never suffer them to be out o' my sight."

In the fulness of her heart Mrs Thornton told this story

at least four times in the year, almost in the same words, and always exhibiting the rings. Her kindly counsels, and the cogent reasons which she urged to Christopher why he should become a scholar, at length awoke his slumbering energies. For the first time, he stood dux of his class, and once there, he stood like a nail driven into a wall, which might not be removed. His teacher, who was a man of considerable knowledge and reading—(though perhaps not what those calling themselves *learned* would call a man of *learning*—for *learned* is a very vague word, and is as frequently applied where real ignorance exists, as to real knowledge)—that teacher who had formerly said that Christopher could not be a Spaniard, because that he had not solidity enough within him—now said that he believed he was one, and not a descendant of Don Quixote; but, if of anybody, a descendant of *him* who gave the immortal Don "a local habitation and a name;" for he now predicted that Christopher May would be a genius.

But, though the orphan at length rose to the head of his class, and though he passed from one class to another, he was still the same wild, boisterous, and daring boy, when they ran shouting from the school, cap in hand, and waving it over their heads, like prisoners relieved from confinement. If there was a quarrel to decide in the whole school, the orphan Christopher was the umpire. If a weak boy, or a cowardly boy, was threatened by another, Christopher became his champion. If a sparrow's nest was to be robbed, to achieve which a tottering gable was to be climbed, he did the deed; yea, or when a football match was to be played on Fastern E'en, (or, as it was there called, Pancake Tuesday,) if the orphan once got the ball at his foot, no man could again touch it.

His birth-day was not known; but he could scarce have completed his thirteenth year when his best friend died. Good, kind-hearted Jenny Thornton—than whom a better woman never breathed—was gathered with the dead; and her last request to her husband was, that he would continue to be the friend and protector of the poor orphan, and especially that he would take care of the rings which had been found upon his mother's hand. Now, Peter was so overwhelmed with grief at the idea of being parted from her who, for ten years, had been dearer to him than his own existence, that he could scarce hear her dying words. He followed her coffin like a broken-hearted man; and he sobbed over her grave, like a weaned child on the lap of its mother. But many months had not passed when it was evident that the orphan Christopher was the only sincere mourner for Jenny Thornton. The widower was still in the prime and strength of his days, being not more than two and forty. He was a prosperous man—one who had had a cheap farm and a good one; and it was believed that Peter was able to purchase the land which he rented. Many, indeed, said that the tenant was a better man than his master—by a "better man," meaning a richer man.

Fair maidens, therefore, and widows to boot, were anxious to obtain the vacant hand of the wealthy widower. Some said that Peter would never forget Jenny, and that he would never marry again, for that she had been to him a wife amongst a thousand; and they spoke of the bitterness of his grief.

"Ay," said others, "but we ne'er like to see the tears run owre fast down the cheeks of a man. They shew that the heart will soon drown its sorrow. Human nature is very frail; and a thing that we thought we would love *for ever* last year, we find that we only *occasionally remember* that we loved it this. If there be a real mourner for the loss of Mrs Thornton, it's the poor, foreign orphan laddie. Peter, notwithstanding all his greeting at the grave, will get another wife before twelve months go round."

They who said so were in the right. Poor Jenny had not been in her grave eleven months and twenty days, when Peter led another Mrs Thornton from the altar. When he had brought her home, he introduced to her the orphan Christopher.

"Now, dear," said he, "here is a laddie—none know whom he belongs to. I found him one morning, when he was a mere infant, screaming on the breast o' his dead mother. Since then I have brought him up. My late wife was very fond o' him—so, indeed, was I; and it is my request that ye will be kind to him. Here," added he, "are two rings which his mother had upon her fingers when I found her a cold corpse. Poor fellow, if anything ever enable him to discover who his parents were, it will be them, though there is but little chance that he ever will. However, I have been as a faither to him for more than ten years; and I trust, love, that ye will act towards him as a mother. Come forward, Christopher," continued he, "and welcome your new mother."

The boy came forward hanging his head, and bashfully stretched out his hand towards her; but the new-made Mrs Thornton had his mother's jewelled ring in her hand, and she observed him not. He stood with his eyes now bent upon the ground, now upon her, and again upon his mother's ring, as she turned it round and round.

"Well," said she, addressing her husband, and still turning it round as she spoke, "It is, indeed, a beautiful ring—a very beautiful ring!"

"I am glad ye think so," said he; "she had been a bonny woman that wore it."

She placed the ring upon her finger, she turned it round again, and gazed on it with admiration. "I should like to wear such a ring," she added.

"Why, hinny, and ye may wear it," said Peter; "for the ring is mine twenty times owre, whatever its value may be, considering what I have done for the laddie."

With an expression of countenance which might be described as something between a smile and a blush, or, as the people north the Tweed very aptly express it, with a "*smirk*," she slipped the ring upon her finger, saying that it fitted as well as though it had been made for her.

Passion flashed in the eyes of the orphan. His "new mother," as Peter styled her, had done what poor Jenny never ventured to do. He withdrew his hand which he had extended to greet her; and he was turning away sullenly, when his foster-father said—"Stop, Christopher, ye must not go away until ye have shaken hands with your mother." And he turned again, and once more extended to her his hand.

"Well," said she, addressing her husband, and putting forth two of her fingers to Christopher, "is it really possible that you have brought up this great boy! What a trouble he must have been—and expense too!"

"Oh, you are quite mistaken," said Peter; "Christopher never cost us the smallest trouble. I have been proud of him and pleased with him, since ever I took him under my roof, and, poor fellow, as to the expense that he has cost me, if I never had seen his face I wouldna hae been a penny richer to-day, but very possibly poorer; for he has very often amused me wi' his drollery, and keepit me in the house, when, but for him, I would have been down at Ponteland, or somewhere else, getting a glass wi' my neighbours."

Many weeks had not elapsed ere Christopher discovered tha this protector who was dead had been succeeded by a living persecutor. A month had not passed when he was not permitted to enter the room where the second Mrs Thornton sat. Before two went round, he was ordered to take his meals with the servants; and he could do nothing with which a fault was not found. He had often, after scraping his shoes for five minutes together, to take them off and examine them, before he durst venture into the passage leading to the kitchen, which was now the only apartment in the house to which he had access.

Peter Thornton beheld the persecution which his adopted son endured; and he expostulated with his better half, that she would treat him more kindly. But she answered him

that he might have children enough of his own to provide for, without becoming a father to those of other people. Now, a stripling that is in love, generally says and does many foolish things which he does not wish to have recalled to his recollection after he has turned thirty; but the middle-aged man who is so smitten, invariably acts much more foolishly than the stripling. I have smiled to see them combing up their few remaining locks, to cover their bald forehead, or carefully pulling away the grey hairs which appeared about their temples, and all to appear young in the eyes of some widowed or matronly divinity. I do not exactly agree with the poet who says—

"Love never strikes but once, that strikes at all;"

for I think, from nineteen to five and twenty, there are few men, (or women either,) who have not felt a particular sensation about their hearts which they took to be love, and felt it more than once too, and which ultimately would have become love, but for particular circumstances which broke off the acquaintanceship; and, before five and thirty, we forget that such a feeling had existed, and laugh at, or profess to have no patience with those who are its victims. We should always remember, however, that it is not easy to put an old head upon young shoulders, and think of how we once felt and acted ourselves; and to recollect, also, how happy, how miserable, we were in those days. Love is an abused word. Elderly people turn up their nostrils when they see it in print. They will hardly read a book where the word occurs. They will fling it away, and cry "stuff!" But, if they would look back upon their days of old, they would treat it with more respect. But the second love of your middle-aged men and women—call it *doting*, or call it by any other name, but do not call it love, for that it is not, and cannot be. Man never knows what love is, until he has experienced the worth of an affectionate wife, who for his sake would suffer all that the world's ills can inflict.

Now, Peter Thornton, though not an old man, and although his first wife had certainly been dear unto him, yet he had a doting fondness for his second spouse, who obtained an ascendency over him, and, to his surprise, left him no longer master of his own house.

But she bore to him a son; and, after the birth of the child, his care over Christopher every day diminished. The orphan was given over to persecution—the hand of every one was raised against him—and, finding that he had now no one to whom he could apply for redress, he lifted up his own hand in his defence. The serving-maids who ill-treated him, soon found him more than their equal; and to the men servants, when they used him roughly, he shook his head, threatening that he would soon be a match for them.

The coldness which Mrs Thornton had at first manifested towards him, soon relapsed into perfect hatred. He was taken from the school; and she hourly forced upon him the most menial offices. For hours together he was doomed to rock the cradle of her child, and was sure of being beaten the moment it awoke. Nor was this all—but when friends visited her, poor Christopher was compelled to wait at the table, at which he had once sat by the side of Jenny Thornton, and whoever might be the guests, he was first served. She even provoked her husband, until he lifted his hand and struck the orphan violently—forgetting the proverb, that "they should have light hands who strike other people's bairns." The boy looked upbraidingly in Peter's face as he struck him for the first time, though he uttered no complaint; but that very look whispered to his heart—"What would Jenny have said had she seen this?" And Peter, repenting of what he did, turned away and wept. Yet a sin that is once committed is less difficult to commit again, and remorse becomes as an echo that is sinking faint. Having, therefore, once lifted his hand against the orphan—though he then wept for having done so—it was not long until the blows were repeated without compunction.

Christopher, however, was a strange boy—perhaps what some would call a provoking one—and often, when Mrs Thornton pursued him from the house to chastise him, he would hastily climb upon the tops of the houses of the farm servants, and sitting astride upon them, nod down to her triumphantly, as with threats she shook her hand in his face; and, smiling, sing—

"Loudon's bonny woods and braes."

But his favourite song, on such occasions, was the following, which, if it be not the exact words that he sang, embodies the sentiment—

Can I forget the woody braes
Where love an' innocence foregather;
Where aft, in early summer-days,
I've crooned a sang amang the heather?
Can I forget my father's hearth—
My mother by the ingle spinnin'—
Their weel-pleased look to see the mirth,
O' a' their bairnies round them rinnin'?

It was a waefu' hour to me,
When I frae them an' love departed:
The tear was in my mother's ee—
My father blest me—broken-hearted;
My aulder brithers took my hand—
The younkers a' ran frae me greetin'!
But, waur than this—I couldna stand
My faithfu' lassie's fareweel meetin'!

Can I forget her parting kiss,
Her last fond look, an' true love token?
Forget an hour sae dear as this!
Forget!—the word shall ne'er be spoken!
Forget!—na, though the foamin' sea,
High hills, and mony a sweepin' river,
May lie between their hearth an' me,
My heart shall be at hame for ever.

Now, when Christopher was pursued by his persecutor, he sought refuge on the house-tops, sitting upon them much after the fashion of a tailor, and carolling the song we have just quoted most merrily. Many, indeed, wondered that he, never having known the hearth of either a father or a mother, should have sung such a song; but it was so, and the orphan delighted to sing it. Yet we often do many things for which we find it difficult to assign a reason. There was one amusing trait in the character of Christopher; and that was, that the more vehemently Mrs Thornton scolded him, and the more bitter her imprecations against him became, so, while he sat as a tailor on the house top, did his song wax louder and more loud, and his strain became merrier. We have heard women talk of being ready to eat the nails from their fingers with vexation, and on such occasions Mrs Thornton was so. But her anger did not amend the disposition of Christopher, though it often drew down upon him the indignation of her husband.

It has already been mentioned that he struck him once; and, having done so, he felt no repugnance to do it frequently. For it is only the first time that we commit a sin that we have the horror of its commission before us. The orphan now became like unto Ishmael; for every man's hand was against him, and I might say every woman's too. Now during the lifetime of Jenny, he had had everything his own way, and whatsoever he said was done; some said that he was a spoiled child, and it was at least evident that his humour was never thwarted. This caused him to have the more enemies now; and every menial on the farm of Peter Thornton became his persecutor. It is the common fate of all favourites—to-day they are treated with abject adulation and to-morrow, if the sun which shone on them be clouded no one thinks himself too low to look on them with disdain.

For more than three years, Christopher's life became a scene of continued martyrdom. He was now, however, a tall and powerful young man of seventeen; and many who had been in the habit of raising their hands against him found it discreet to do so no more. But Mrs Thornton was not of this number; she found some cause to lift her hand

and strike the orphan, as often as he came into her presence. Even Peter, kind as he once had been, treated him almost as cruelly as his wife. It was not that he disliked him as she did; but she had soured and fretted his disposition; and, unconsciously to himself, from being the orphan's friend, he became his terror and tormentor.

But one day, when the violence of Mrs Thornton far exceeded the bounds of endurance, Christopher turned upon her, and, with the revenge of a Spaniard glistening in his eyes, grasped her by the throat. She screamed aloud for help, and her husband and the farm-servants rushed to her assistance.

"Back! back!" exclaimed Christopher—"woman, give me the rings! give me the rings!—they are mine, they were my mother's."

Peter sprang forward and grasped hold of him.

"Touch me not!" exclaimed the orphan; "I will be your slave no longer! Give me the rings—my mother's rings!"

Peter stood aghast at the manner of the boy. His every look, his every action, bespoke desperation. He thrust his clenched hand towards Mr Thornton, exclaiming—"Touch me not—the rings are mine—I will have them."

"The meikle mischief confound ye!" exclaimed Peter, with a look of half fear and bewilderment, "what in a' the world is the matter wi' ye, Christopher?—is the laddie out o' his head?"

"The rings! my mother's rings!" cried the orphan; and, as he spoke, he grasped more violently the hand of Mrs Thornton.

"The like o' that, said Peter, "I never saw in my existence! In my opinion, the laddie is no in his right judgment."

But Christopher tore the rings from the hands of Mrs Thornton, exclaiming—"Farewell! farewell!"

"The like o' that!" said Peter, in amazement, holding up his hands; "the laddie is surely daft!—follow him, some o' ye."

Mrs Thornton sank down in hysterics. Her husband endeavoured to soothe and restore her; and the men-servants followed Christopher. But it was an idle task. No one had rivalled him in speed of foot, and they could not overtake him.

"The time will come," he cried, as he ran, "when Peter Thornton will repent his conduct towards me. Follow me not, for the first who shall lay a hand upon me shall die."

The farm servants who pursued him were awed by his manner; and, after following him about a mile, turned back.

"Where can the laddie have gone to?" said Peter; "he never took ony o' those fits in Jenny's time. I hope, wife, that ye have done nothing to him that ye ought not to have done."

"Me done to him!" she cried—"ye will bring up your beggars, and this is your reward."

"Mrs Thornton," answered he, "I am amazed and astonished to behold this conduct in Christopher. For more than a dozen years he has been an inmate beneath my roof; seldom have I had to quarrel him, and never until you became my wife."

The words between Peter and his better half grew loud and angry; but, instead of describing their matrimonial altercations, we shall follow the orphan Christopher.

But, before accompanying him in his flight from the house of Peter Thornton, we shall go back a few years, and take up another part of his history.

There resided in the neighbourhood in which Christopher had been brought up, one George Wilkinson, who had a daughter named Jessie. Christopher and Jessie were schoolmates together; and when the other children ran hallooing from the school, they walked together, whispering, smiling at each other. It was strange that affection should have sprung up in such young hearts. But it was so.

Christopher became the one absorbing thought upon which the mind of Jessie dwelt; and she became the day dream of his being. She was comparatively a child when he left the house of his foster-father—so was he; yet, although they became thus early parted, they forgot not each other. Young as she was, Jessie Wilkinson lay on her bed and wept for the sake of poor Christopher. They indeed might be said to be but the tears of a child; yet they were tears which we can shed but once. Young as Jessie was, Christopher became the dream of her future existence. She remembered the happy days that they had passed together, when the hawthorn was in blossom, or the bean was in the bloom, when they loitered together, side by side, and the air was pregnant with fragrance, while his hand would touch hers, and he would say, "Jessie!" and look in her face and wonder what he meant to have said; and she would answer him, "Christopher!" Still did those days haunt the recollection of the simple girl; and as she grew in years and stature, his remembrance became the more entwined around her heart. When she had reached the age of womanhood, other wooers offered her their hand; but she thought of the boy that had first loved her; and to him her memory clung, as the evening dawn falleth on the hills. Her father was but a poor man; and when many perceived the liking which Christopher May, the adopted son and supposed heir of the rich Peter Thornton, entertained for her, they said that nothing, or, at least no good, would proceed from their acquaintance. But they who so said did not truly judge of the heart of Jessie. She was one of those who can love but once, and that once must be for ever. In their early childhood, Christopher had become a part of her earliest affection, and she now found it impossible to forget him, or shake his remembrance from her bosom. It was certainly a girl's love, and elderly people will laugh at it; but why should they laugh? Had they the feelings which they once cherished—the feelings which were once dearest to them—the feelings without which they believed they could not exist?—and wherefore could they blame poor Jessie for remembering what they had forgot?

Many years passed, and no one heard of Christopher. Even Peter Thornton knew nothing of where he was, or what had become of him—the child of his adoption was lost to him. He heard his neighbours upbraid him with having treated the boy with cruelty; and Peter's heart was troubled. He reflected upon his wife for her conduct towards the orphan, and it gave rise to bickerings between them.

Hitherto we have spoken of the unknown orphan—we must now speak of an unknown soldier. At the battle of Salamanca, amongst the men who there distinguished themselves, there was a young sergeant whose feats of valour attracted the notice of his superiors. Where the battle raged fiercest, there were the effects of his arm made visible; his impetuosity over all his enemies had attracted the notice of his superior officers. But, in the moment of victory, when the streets were lined with dead, the young hero fell, covered with bayonet wounds. A field-officer, who had been an observer of his conduct, ordered a party of his men to attempt his rescue. The life of the young hero was long despaired of; and when he recovered, several officers, in admiration of his courage, agreed to present him with a sword. It was beautifully ornamented, and bore the inscription—

"Presented to Christopher May, sergeant in the ——— regiment of infantry, by several officers who were witnesses of the heroism he displayed at the battle of Salamanca."

The sword was presented to him at the head of his regiment, and the officer who placed it in his hand, addressed him, saying—"Young soldier, the gallant bearing which you exhibited at Salamanca, has excited the admiration of all who beheld it. The officers of your own regiment, therefore, and others, have deemed it their duty to present you with this sword, as a reward of merit, and a testimony of the admiration with which your heroism has inspired them. I have now the gratification of placing it in the hands of a brave man. Take it, and if your parents yet live, it will be

a trophy of which they will be proud, and which your posterity will exhibit with admiration."

"My parents!" said the young soldier, with a sigh; "alas, Sir! I never knew one whom I could call by the endearing name of father or of mother. I am an orphan—an unknown one. I believe I am not even an Englishman, but a native of the land for the freedom of which we now fight!"

"You a Spaniard!" said the officer with surprise; "it is impossible—neither your name nor features bespeak you to belong to this nation. But you say that you never knew your parents—what know you of your history?"

"Little, indeed," he replied; and as he spoke, the officers gathered around him, and he continued—"I have been told that in the month of May, four and twenty years ago, the dead body of a woman was found in a farm yard, about fifteen miles north of Newcastle. She was dressed in Spanish costume, and a child of about three years of age, hung weeping on her bosom. I was that child; and I have been told that the few words I could then lisp, were Spanish. The kind-hearted wife of the honest Northumbrian who found me, brought me up as her own child, and while she lived, I might almost have said I had a mother. But at her death, I found indeed that I had neither parent, kindred, nor country, but that I was in truth, what some called me in derision —'*The Unknown*.' I entered the army, and have fought in defence of the land to which I believe I belong. This only do I know of my history, or of who or what I am."

While the young sergeant spoke, every eye was bent upon him interestedly; but there was one who was moved even to tears. He was an officer of middle age, named Major Ferguson. He approached the gallant youth, he gazed earnestly in his face.

"You say that you were about three years old," he said, "when you were found clinging to the breast of your mother: have you no remembrance of her—no recollection of the name by which you were then called?"

"None! none!" answered the other. "I sometimes fancy that, as the vague remembrance of a dream, I recollect clinging around my mother's neck, and kissing her cold lips; but whether it indeed be remembrance, or merely the tale that has been often told me, I am uncertain. I often imagine also that her beautiful features yet live in my memory, though with the indistinctness of an ethereal being—like a vapour that is dying away on the far horizon; and I am uncertain, also, whether the fair vision that haunts me be indeed a dim remembrance of what my mother was, or a creation of my brain."

The interest of the scene was heightened by the resemblance which Major Ferguson and the young serjeant bore to each other. All observed it—all expressed their surprise —and the Major, in his turn, began his tale.

"Your features, young man," said he, "and your story, have drawn tears to the eyes of an old soldier. Thirty years ago I was in this country, and became an inmate in the house of a rich merchant in Madrid. His name was Valdez, and he had an only daughter called Maria. When I first beheld her, she was about nineteen, and a being more beautiful I had never seen—I have not seen. Affection sprang up between us; for it was impossible to look on her and not love. Her father, though he at first expressed some opposition to our wishes, on the ground of my being a Protestant, at length gave his consent, and Maria became my wife. For several months our happiness was as a dream—as a summer sky where there is no cloud. But our days of felicity were of short continuance. We have all heard of the revengeful disposition of the Spanish people, and it was our lot to be its victims I have said that it was impossible to look upon the face of Maria, and not love; and many of the grandees and wealthiest citizens of Madrid sought her hand. Amongst the former, was a nephew of an Inquisitor. He vowed to have his revenge—and he has had it. In the dead of night, a band of ruffians burst into the bed-chamber of Maria's father, and dragged him to the dungeons of the Inquisition. For several weeks, and we could learn nothing of what had become of him; but his property was seized and confiscated, as though he had been a common felon. My wife was then the mother of an infant son, and I endeavoured to effect our concealment, until an opportunity of escaping to England might be found. We had approached within a hundred yards of the vessel, when a band of armed men rushed upon us. They overpowered me; and while one party bore away my wife and child, others dragged me into a carriage, one holding a pistol to my breast, while another tied a bandage over my eyes. They continued to drive with furious rapidity, for about six hours, when I was torn from the carriage, and dragged, between the ruffians, through numerous winding passages. I heard the grating of locks, and the creaking of bolts, as they proceeded Door succeeded door, groaning on their unwilling hinges, as they ascended stairs, and descended others, in an interminable labyrinth. Still the men who hurried me onward maintained a sullen silence; and no sound was heard, save the clashing of prison doors, and the sepulchral echo of their footsteps ringing through the surrounding dungeons. They at length stopped. A cord, suspended from a block in the roof, was fastened round my waist; and when one, turning a sort of windlass, which communicated with the other end of the cord, raised me several feet from the ground, his comrade drew a knife, and cut asunder the fastenings that bound my arms. While one, holding the handle of the machine, kept me hanging in the air, other two applied a key to a large square stone in the floor, which, aided by a spring, they with some difficulty raised, and revealed a yawning opening to a dungeon, yet deeper and more dismal than that which formed its entrance. The moment my hands were at liberty, I tore the bandage from my eyes, and perceiving, through the aid of a dim lamp that flickered in a corner of the vault, the horror of my situation, I struggled in desperation. But my threatenings and my groans were answered only by their hollow echoes, or the more dismal laughter of my assassins.

"'Down! down!' vociferated both voices to their companion, as the stone was raised; and, in a moment, I was plunged to the dark mouth of the dungeon. I uttered a cry of agony, louder and longer than the rest; and, as my body sunk into the abyss, I clutched its edge in despair. One of the ruffians sprang forward, and, blaspheming as he raised his foot, dashed his iron heels upon my fingers. Mine was the grasp of a dying man; and, thrusting forward my right hand, I seized the ancle of the monster, who, attempting to kick me in the face, with my left I strengthened my hold, and my body plunging downward with the movement, dragged after me the wretch, who, uttering a piercing shriek, as his head dashed on the brink of the fearful dungeon, his weight wrested him from my grasp, and with an imprecation on his tongue he was plunged headlong into darkness, many fathoms deep. Startled by the cry of his comrade, the other sprang from the machine by which he was lowering me into the vault; and I in consequence descended with the violence of a stone driven from a strong arm. But, before I reached the bottom, the cord by which I hung was expended, and I swung in torture between the sides of the dungeon. In this state of agony I remained for several minutes, till one of the miscreants cutting the rope, I fell with my face upon the bloody and mangled body of their accomplice; and the huge stone was placed over us, enveloping both in darkness, solid and substantial as the pit of wrath itself.

"A paralyzing feeling of horror and surprise, and the violence with which I fell upon the mangled body of my victim, for a time deprived me of all consciousness of my situation · nor was it until the convulsive groans of the

bleeding wretch beneath me, recalled me, in some measure, to a sense of other miseries than my own, that a remembrance of the past, and a feeling of the present, opened upon my mind, like the confused terror of a dismal dream. I rose slowly to my feet, and, disengaging myself from the rope by which I was suspended into the vault, endeavoured to look around the walls of my prison-house—but all was dark as the grave. Recollecting the part sustained in seizing me by the wounded man, who still groaned and writhed at my feet, I darted fiercely upon him; and hurling him from the ground, exclaimed—'Villain!—tell me, or die!—where am I? or by whom am I brought here?' A loud, long yell of terror, accompanied by violent and despairing struggles, like a wild beast tearing from the paws of a lion, was the only answer returned by the miserable being. And as the piteous and heart-piercing yell rang round the cavern, and its echoes, multiplying in darkness, at length died away, leaving silence more dolorous than ourselves, I felt as a man from the midst of a marriage-feast, suddenly thrust into the cells of Bedlam; where, instead of the music of the harp and the lute, was the shriek and the clanking chains of insanity; for bridal ornaments, the madman's straw; and for the gay dance, the convulsions of the maniac, and the sorrowful gestures of idiocy. Every feeling of indignation passed away—my blood grew cold—the skin moved upon my flesh—I again laid the wretched man on the damp earth, and fearfully groped to the opposite side of the dungeon.

"As I moved around, feeling through the dense darkness of my prison, I found it a vast square, its sides composed merely of the rude strata of earth or rock; and measuring nearly six times the length of my extended arms. As often as I moved, bones seemed to crackle beneath my feet; and a noise, like the falling of armour, and the sounding of steel, accompanied the crumbling fragments. Once I stooped to ascertain the cause, and raising a heavy body, a part of it fell with a loud, hollow crash among my feet, leaving the lighter portion in my hands. It was a round bony substance, covered, and partly filled with damp cold dust. I was neither superstitious nor a coward: but, as I drew my hand around it, my body quivered—the hair upon my head moved—and my heart felt heavy. It was the form of a human skull. The damp dust had once been the temple of a living soul. My fingers entered the sockets of the eyes—the teeth fell in my hands—and the still fresh and dewy hair twined around it. I shuddered—it fell from my hands—the chill of death passed over me. The horrid conviction that I was immured in a living grave, absorbed every other feeling; and, smiting my brow in horror, I threw myself, with a groan, amidst the dead of other years.

"I again sprang to my feet, with the undetermined and confused wildness of despair. The mournful howlings of the assassin continued to render the horrid sepulchre still more horrible, and gave to its darkness a deeper ghostliness. Dead to every emotion of sympathy, stricken with dismal realities, and more terrible imaginations, yet burning for revenge, directed by the howlings of the miserable man, and hesitating to distinguish between them and their incessant echoes, stretching my hands before me, I again approached him, to extort a confession of the cause and place of my imprisonment, or rather living burial. Vainly I raised him from the ground—threatening, soothing, and expostulation were alike unavailing. On hearing my voice, the miserable being shrieked with redoubled bitterness, plunged furiously, and gnashed his teeth, fastening them, in the extremity of his frenzy, in his own flesh. His fierce agony recalled to my bosom an emotion of pity; and, for a moment, forgetful of my own injuries and condition, I thought only of relieving his suffering; but my presence seemed to add new madness to his tortures; and he tore himself from my hold with the lamentable yells of a tormented mastiff, and the strength of a giant, who, in the last throe of expiring nature grapples with his conqueror. He reeled wildly a few paces, and fell, with a crash, upon the earth.

"Slowly and dismally the hours moved on, with no sound to measure their progress, save the audible beating of my own heart, and the death-like howling moan of my companion. As I leaned against the wall, counting these dismal divisions of time, which appeared thus fearfully to mete out the duration of my existence, through the black darkness, whose weight had become oppressive to my eyeballs, I beheld, far above me, on the opposite wall, a faint shadow, like the ghost of light, streaking its side, but so indistinct and imperfect, I knew not whether it was fancy or reality. With the earnestness of death, my eyes remained fixed on the 'gloomy light;' and it threw upon my bosom a hope dim as itself. Again I doubted its existence—deemed it a creation of my brain; and groping along the damp floor, where my hand seemed passing over the ribs of a skeleton, I threw a loose fragment in the air, towards the point from whence the doubted glimmering proceeded; and perceived for a moment, as it fell, the shadow of a substance. Then, springing forward to the spot, I gasped to inhale, with its feeble ray, one breath that was not agony.

"Thirst burned my lips, and, to cool them, they were pressed against the damp walls of the prison; but my tongue was still dry—my throat parched—and hunger began to prey upon me. While thus suffering, a faint light streamed from a narrow opening in the roof of the vault. Slowly a feeble lamp was lowered through the aperture, and descended within two or three feet of my head. A small basket, containing a portion of bread and a pitcher of water, suspended by a cord, was let down into the vault. I seized the pitcher, as I would have rushed upon liberty; and raising it to my lips, as the pure, grateful beverage allayed the fever of my thirst, I shed a solitary tear, and, in the midst of my misery, that tear was a tear of joy—like the morning-star gilding the horizon, when the surrounding heavens are wrapt in tempest. With it the feelings of the Christian and the man met in my bosom; and, bending over my fellow-sufferer, I applied the water to his lips. The poor wretch devoured the draught to its last drop with greediness.

"The presence and the unceasing groans of my companion—yea, the dungeon, and darkness themselves, were forgotten in the one deadening and bitter idea, that my wife and child were also captives, and in the power of ruffians. If any other thought was indulged a moment, it was longing for liberty, that I might fly to their rescue—and it was then only that I became again sensible of captivity; and my eyes once more sought the dubious gleam that stretched fitfully across the wall, becoming more evident to perception, as I became inured to the surrounding blackness. Hope burned and brightened, as I traced the source of its dreamy shadows; and, from thence, weaved plans of escape, which, in the calculation of fancy, were already as performed; though, before reason and common possibilities, they would have perished as the dewy nets that, with the damps of an autumnal morning, overspread the hawthorn with their spangled lace-work, and, before the rising sunbeam, shrink into nothing

"But gradually my grief and despair subsided, and gave place to the cheering influence of hope, and the resolution of attempting my escape; and I rose to eat the bread and drink the water of captivity, to strengthen me for the task. For many hours, the presence of my companion had been forgotten; he still continued to howl, as one whom the horrors of an accusing conscience was withholding from the grasp of death; and I, roused from the reverie of my feelings and projects at the sound of his sufferings, hastened to apply water and morsels of bread to the lips of my perishing fellow-prisoner; for bread and water had been lowered into the vault.

"In order to carry my plan of escape into effect, for the first time, aided by the lamp that was suspended over me, I

gazed inquisitively, and with a feeling of dismay, around the Golgotha in which I was immured. There lay my hideous companion, the foam of pain and insanity gurgling from his mouth; beside him the skeleton of a mailed warrior, and around, the uncoffined bones of four others, partly covered with their armour, and

'The brands yet rusted in their bony hands.'

"Although prepared for such a scene, I placed my hands before my eyes, shuddering at the thought of becoming as one of those—of being their companion while I lived—of lying down by the side of a skeleton to die! The horror of the idea fired anew my resolution, and added more than human strength to my arm. I again eagerly sought the direction of the doubtful gleam, which formerly filled me with hope; and was convinced that from thence an opening might be effected, if not to perfect liberty, to a sight of the blessed light of heaven, where freedom, I dreaded not, would easily be found. Filled with determination, which no obstacle could impede, I took one of the swords, which had lain by the side of its owner, untouched for ages, and with this instrument commenced the laborious and seemingly impossible task, of cutting out a flight of steps in the rude wall, and thereby gain the invisible aperture, from which something like light was seen to emanate. The ray proceeded from an extreme angle of the dungeon, and apparently at its utmost height. The materials on which I had to work, were chiefly a hard granite rock, and other lighter, but scarce more manageable strata.

"Several anxious and miserable weeks thus passed in sluggish succession. Half of my task was accomplished; and hope, with impatience, looked forward to its completion. I still divided my scanty meals with my companion, who, although recovered from the bruises occasioned by his fall, was become more horrible and fiend-like than before. As his body resumed its functions, his mind became the terrible imaginings of a guilty conscience. He had either lost, or forgotten the power of walking upright, and prowled, howling around the dungeon, on his hands and feet; while his dark bushy beard, and revolting aspect, gave him more the manner and appearance of a wild beast than a human being.

"Our portion of food being barely sufficient for the sustenance of one, hunger had long been added to the list of our sufferings; but particularly to those of the maniac. And, with the cunning peculiar to such unfortunates, he watched the return of the basket, which was daily lowered with provisions, and frequently before I—who, absorbed in the completion of my task, forgot or heeded not my jailer's being within hearing—could descend to the ground, he would grasp the basket, swallow off the water at a draught, and hurry with the bread to a corner of a dungeon; thus leaving me without food for the next twenty four hours.

"It was at the period when I had half completed my object, that my companion springing, as was his wont, upon the basket, before I could approach to withhold him, I perceived he had drained off the contents of a goblet, in which a few drops of a dark coloured liquid still remained; and the pitcher of water was untouched. The wretched maniac had swallowed the draught but a few minutes, when, rolling himself together, his screams and contortions became more frightful than before, and increasing in virulence for an hour, he lay motionless a few seconds, gasping for breath; and springing suddenly to his feet, he gazed wistfully above and around him, with a look of extreme agony, and exclaiming, 'Heaven help me!' he rushed fiercely towards the wall in the opposite direction to where I was attempting to effect my escape, gave one furious pull, at what appeared the solid rock, and with a groan, fell back and expired.

"When the horror occasioned by his death, in some degree abated, the singularity of the manner in which he tore at the wall of the dungeon, fixed my attention; and with almost frantic joy, I perceived that a portion of the hitherto thought impenetrable rock, had yielded several inches to his dying grasp. I hastily removed the body, and pulling eagerly at the unloosed fragment, it fell upon the ground, a rough unhewn lump of granite, leaving an opening of about two feet square in the rude rocky wall, from which it was so cut, as to seem to feeling and almost appearance, a solid part of it.

"My task was now abandoned. The gleam of light, which for weeks was to me an object of such intense interest, proceeded from a mere hairbreadth cleft in the rock. Taking up a sword which lay upon the ground, I drew my body into the aperture formed by the removal of the piece of rock; and creeping slowly on my hands and knees, groping with the weapon before me, I at length found the winding and dismal passage sufficiently lofty to permit me to stand erect. I seemed enveloped in an interminable cavern, now opening into spacious chambers, clothed with crystal; again losing itself in low passages, or narrow chinks of the rock, and suddenly terminating in a slippery precipice, beneath which gurgling waters were heard to run. Hours and hours passed; still I was groping onward; when I suddenly found my hopes cut off, by the interposition of a precipice. I probed fearfully forward with the sword, but all was an unsubstantial void; I drew it on each side, and there it met but the solid walls. I knelt, and reached down the sword to the length of my arm, but it touched nothing. In agony, I dropped the weapon, by its sound to ascertain the depth; and, delighted, found it did not exceed eight or ten feet. I cautiously slid down, and groping around, again placed my hand upon the sword. Though my heart occasionally sank within me, yet the overcoming of each difficulty lent its inspiring aid to overcome its successor. Often every hope appeared extinct. Now I ascended, or again descended the dropping and crystaled rocks; now crept into openings, which suddenly terminated, and turning again, anxiously listened to the sound of the rippling water as my only guide. Often, in spite of every precaution, I was stunned with a blow from the abrupt lowness of the roof, or suddenly plunged to the arms in the numerous pools, whose waters had been dark from their birth.

"Language cannot convey an idea of the accumulating horrors of my situation. Struggling with suffocation, with a feeling more awful than terror, and with despair, the agony of darkness must be *experienced* to be imagined.

"Still I moved on; and suddenly, when ready to sink wearied, fainting, hopeless, the glorious light of day streamed upon my sight. I bounded forward with a wild shout; but the magnificent sun, bursting from the eastern heavens, blinded my unaccustomed gaze.

"I again found that I was free—but my wife!—my child!—where were they? It was many years before that I learned that the nephew of the Inquisitor who had sought her hand, having died, she regained her liberty, and fled with our infant son to Scotland, to seek the home of her lost husband. Since then I have never heard of them again."

When the Major had thus concluded his narrative—"Here," said Christopher, "are two rings which were taken from the fingers of my mother—both bear inscriptions."

The old officer gazed upon them. "They were hers—my Maria's," he exclaimed; "I myself placed them upon her fingers! Son of my Maria, thou art mine!"

The Major purchased a commission for his long-lost son and when peace was proclaimed throughout Europe, they returned to Northumberland together, where Christopher gave his sword as a memorial to his foster-father, Peter Thornton, and his hand to Jessie Wilkinson.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE FUGITIVE.

CHAPTER I.

When Prince Charles Edward, at the head of his hardy Highlanders, took up his headquarters in Edinburgh, issuing proclamations and holding levees, amongst those who attended the latter was a young Englishman, named Henry Blackett, then a student at the university, and the son of a Sir John Blackett of Winburn Priory, in Cheshire. His mother had been a Miss Cameron, a native of Inverness-shire, and the daughter of a poor but proud military officer. From her he had imbibed principles or prejudices in favour of the house of Stuart; and when he had been introduced to the young adventurer at Holyrood, and witnessed the zeal of his army, his enthusiasm was kindled—there was a romance in the undertaking which pleased his love of enterprise, and he resolved to offer his sword to the Prince, and hazard his fortunes with him. The offer was at once graciously and gratefully accepted, and Henry Blackett was enrolled as an officer in the rebel army.

He followed the Prince through prosperity and adversity, and when Charles became a fugitive in the land of his fathers, Henry Blackett was one of the last to forsake him. He, too, was hunted from one hiding-place to another; like him whom he had served, he was a fugitive, and a price was set upon his head.

As has been stated, he imbibed his principles in favour of the house of Stuart from his mother; but she had been dead for several years. His father was a weak man—one of whom it may be said that he had no principles at all; but being knighted by King George, on the occasion of his performing some civic duty, he became a violent defender of the house of Brunswick, and he vowed that, if the law did not, he would disinherit his son for having taken up arms in defence of Charles. But what chiefly strengthened him in this resolution, was not so much his devotion for the reigning family, as his attachment to one Miss Norton, the daughter of a Squire Norton of Norton Hall. She was a young lady of much beauty, and mistress of what are called accomplishments; but, in saying this much, I have recorded all her virtues. Her father's character might be summed up in one brief sentence—he was a deep, designing, needy villain. He was a gambler—a gentleman by birth—a knave in practice. He had long been on terms of familiarity with Sir John Blackett—he knew his weakness, and he knew his wealth, and he rejoiced in the attachment which he saw him manifesting for his daughter, in the hope that it would be the means of bringing his estates within his control. But the property of Sir John being entailed, it consequently would devolve on Henry as his only surviving son. He, therefore, was an obstacle to the accomplishment of the schemes on which Norton brooded; and when the latter found that he had joined the army of the young Chevalier, he was chiefly instrumental in having his name included in the list of those for whose apprehension rewards were offered; and he privately, and at his own expense, employed spies to go in quest of him. He also endeavoured to excite his father more bitterly against him. Nor did his designs rest here—but, as he beheld the fondness of the knight for his daughter increase, he, with the cunning of a demon, proposed to him to break the entail; and when the other inquired how it could be done, he replied—"Nothing is more simple; deny him to be your heir—pronounce him illegitimate. There is no living witness of your marriage with his mother. The only document to prove it is some thumbed leaf in the register of an obscure parish church in the Highlands of Scotland; and we can secure it."

To this most unnatural proposal the weak and wicked old man consented; and I shall now describe the means employed by Norton to become possessed of the parish register referred to.

Squire Norton had a son who was in all respects worthy of such a father—he was the image of his mind and person. In short, he was one of the *things* who, in those days, resembled those who in our own call themselves *men of the world*, forsooth! and who, under that name, infest and corrupt society—making a boast of their worthlessness—poisoning innocence—triumphing in their work of ruin—and laughing, like spirits of desolation, over the daughter's misery and disgrace, the father's anguish, the wretched mother's tears, and the shame of a family, which they have accomplished. There are such creatures, who disgrace both the soul and the shape of man, who are mere shreds and patches of debauchery—sweepings from the shops of the tailor, the milliner and the hair-dresser—who live upon the plunder obtained under false pretences from the industrious—who giggle, ogle, pat a snuff-box, or affect to nod in a church, to be thought sceptics or fine gentlemen. One of such was young Norton; and he was sent down to Scotland to destroy the only proof which Henry Blackett, in the event of his being pardoned could bring forward in support of his legitimacy.

He arrived at a lonely village in Inverness-shire, near which the cottage formerly occupied by Major Cameron, the grandfather of Henry, was situated; and of whom he found that few of the inhabitants remembered more than that "there lived a man." Finding the only inn that was in the village much more cleanly and comfortable than he had anticipated, he resolved to make it his hotel during his residence, and inquired of the landlady if there were any one in the village with whom a gentleman could spend an evening, and obtain information respecting the neighbourhood.

"Fu' shurely! fu' shurely, sir!" replied his Highland hostess—"there pe te auld tominie."

"Who?" inquired he, not exactly comprehending her Celtic accent.

"Wha put te auld tominie?" returned she; "an' a tis-creet, goot shentleman he pe as in a' te toun."

"The dominie?—the dominie?" he repeated, in a tone of perplexity.

"Oigh! oigh! te tominie," added she, "tat teaches te pits o' pairns, an' raises te psalm in te kirk."

He now comprehended her meaning; and, from her coupling the dominie's name with the kirk, believed that he might be of use to him in the accomplishment of his object, and desired that he might be sent for.

"Oigh!" returned she, smiling, "an' he no pe lang, for he like te trappie unco weel."

Within five minutes, Dugald Mackay, precentor, teacher, and parish-clerk of Glencleugh, entered the parlour of Mrs Macnab. Never was a more striking contrast exhibited in castle or in cottage. Here stood young Norton, bedecked with all the foppery of an exquisite of his day; and there stood Dugald Mackay, his thick bushy grey hair falling on his shoulders, holding in his hand a hat not half the size of his head, which had neither been made nor bought for him, and which had become brown with service, and was now stitched in many places, to keep it together. Round it was wrapped a narrow stripe of crape browner than itself, and over all winded several yards of gut and hair-line, with hooks attached, betokening his angling propensities. Dugald was a thickset old man, with a face blooming like his native heather. His feet were thrust into immense brogues, as brown as his hat, and their formidable patches shewed that their wearer could use the *lingle* and *elshun*, although his profession was to "teach the young idea how to shoot." He wore tartan hose—black breeches, fastened at the knees by silver gilt buckles, and much the worse for the wear, while, from the accumulation of ink and dust, they might have stood upright. His vest was huge and double-breasted, its colour not recognised by painters; and his shoulders were covered by a very small tartan coat, the tails of which hardly reached his waist. Such was Dugald Mackay; and the youth, plying him with the bottle, endeavoured to ascertain how far he could render him subservient to his purpose.

"You appear fond of angling," said Norton.

"Fond o' fishing?" returned the man of letters; "ou ay! ou ay!—hur hae mony time filt te creel o' te shentlemen frae Inverness, for te sixpence, nd te shilling, and te pig crown, not to let tem gaun pack wi' te empty pasket. And hur will teach your honour, or tress your honour's hooks, should you be stopping to fish. Here pe goot sport to your honour," continued he, raising a bumper to his lips.

The other, glad to assign a plausible pretext for his visit, said that he had come a few days for the sake of fishing, and inquired how long his guest had been in the neighbourhood.

"Hur peen schulemaister and parish-clerk in Glencleugh for forty year," replied Dugald.

"Parish-clerk!" said Norton, eagerly, and checking himself, continued—"that is—in the church you mean, you raise the tunes?"

"Ou ay, hur nainsel' pe precenter too," answered Dugald; "put hur be schulemaister and parish-clerk into te pargain."

"And what are your duties as parish-clerk?" inquired the other, in a tone of indifference.

"Ou, it pe to keep te pooks wi' te marriages, te chrisenings, and te deaths. Here pe to your honour's very goot luck again," said he, swallowing another bumper.

Thus the holder of the birch and parish chronicler began to help himself to one glass after another, until the candles began to dance reels and strathspeys before him. At length the angler, expressing a wish to see such a curiosity as the matrimonial and baptismal register of a hamlet so remote, out sallied Dugald, describing curved lines as he went, and shortly returned, bearing the eventful quartos under his arm. Norton looked through them, laughing, jesting, and professing to be amused, and his eye quickly fell upon the page which he sought. Dugald laughed, drank, and talked, until his rough head sank upon his breast, and certain nasal sounds gave notice that the schoolmaster was abroad. In a moment, Norton transferred the leaf which contained the certificate of Lady Blackett's marriage, from the volume to his pocket. His father had ordered him to destroy it; but the son, vicious as the father, determined to keep it, and to hold it over him as an instrument of terror to extort money. The dominie being roused to take one glass more by way of a night-cap, was led home as usual, by Mrs Macnab's servant-of-all-work, who carried the volumes.

Shortly after this, the marriage between Sir John Blackett and Miss Norton took place; her father rejoiced in the success of his schemes, and Henry was disinherited and disowned.

CHAPTER II.

While the latter events which we have recorded in the last chapter were taking place, Henry Blackett, the rebel soldier, was a fugitive, flying from hiding-place to hiding-place, seeking concealment in the mountains and in the glens, in the forest and crowded city, assuming every disguise, and hunted from covert to covert. A reward was not offered for his apprehension, in particular, by government, but he was included amongst those whom loyal subjects were forbidden to conceal; and two emissaries, sent out by Norton, sought him continually, to deliver him up. Ignorant of his father's marriage, or of the villain's part he had acted towards him, though conscious of his anger at his having joined Prince Charles, he was wandering in Dumfries-shire, by the shores of the Solway, disguised as a sailor, and watching an opportunity to return home, when the hunters after his life suddenly sprang upon him, exclaiming—"Ha! Blackett, the traitor!—the the five hundred pounds are ours!"

Armed only with the branch of a tree, which he carried partly for defence and as a walking-stick, he repelled them with the desperate fierceness of a man whose life is at stake One he disabled, and the other, being unable to contend against him singly, permitted him to escape. He rushed at his utmost speed across the fields for many miles, avoiding the highways and public paths, until he sank panting and exhausted on the ground. He had not lain long in this situation when he was discovered by a wealthy farmer, who was known in the neighbourhood by the appellation of "canny Willie Galloway."

"Puir young chield," said Willie, casting on him a look of compassion, "ye seem sadly distressed. Do ye think I could be o' ony service to ye? From yer appearance, ye wadna be the waur o' a nicht's lodging, and I can only say that ye are heartily welcome to't."

Henry had been so long the object of pursuit and persecution, that he regarded every one with suspicion; and starting to his feet and grasping the branch firmer in his hand, he said—"Know you what you say?—or would you betray the wretched?"

"It is o' nae manner o' use gripping your stick," said Willie, calmly, "for I'm allooed to be a first-rate cudgel-player—the best atween Stranraer and Dumfries. But, as to kennin' what I said, I was offerin' ye a nicht's lodgings; and as to betrayin' the wretched, I wadna see a hawk strike doon a sparrow, not a spider a midge, if I could prevent it."

"You seem honest," said Henry; "I am miserable, and will trust you."

"Be thankit," answered the other; "I dare to say I'm as honest as my neebors; and as ye seem in distress I will be very happy to serve ye, if I can do't in a creditable way."

Willie Galloway was a bachelor of five-and-forty, and his house was kept by an old woman, a distant relative, called Janet White. Henry accompanied him home, and communicated to him his story. Willie took a liking for him, and vowed that he would not only shelter him while he had a roof over his head, but that he would defend him against every enemy while he had a hand that he could lift; and the better to ensure his concealment, he proposed that he should pass as his sister's son, and not even write to his father to intimate where he was, until the persecution against those who had "been *out* with poor Charlie" was past.

In the neighbourhood of Willie's farm there resided an elderly gentleman named Laird Howison. He was an eccentric but most kind-hearted man, of whom many believed and said that his imagination was stronger than his reason; and in so saying it was probable that they were not far from the truth. But of that the reader will determine as he sees more of the laird. There resided with him a beautiful orphan girl named Helen Marshall, the daughter of the late parish clergyman, and to whom he had been left guardian from her childhood. But as she grew up in loveliness before him, she became as a dream of futurity that soothed and cheered his existence; and although he was already on the wrong side of fifty, he resolved that, as soon as she was twenty-one, he would offer her his hand and fortune. Janet White, the housekeeper and relative of Willie Galloway, had nursed Helen in infancy, and the lovely maiden was therefore a frequent visitor at his house. She there met Henry, and neither saw nor listened to him with indifference, and her beauty, sense, and gentleness made a like impression upon him. Willie, though a bachelor, had penetration enough to perceive that when they met there was meaning in their eyes; and he began to rally Henry—saying, "Now, there would be a match for ye!—when the storm has blawn owre your head, just tak ye that bonny Scotch lassie hame to England wi' ye as yer wife, and ye will find her a treasure, such as ye may wander the world round and no find her marrow."

As their intimacy and affection increased Henry communicated to Helen the secret of his birth and situation; and like a true woman, she loved him the more for the dangers to which he was exposed. He had remained more than eight months with his friend and protector; and imagining that the persecution against himself, and others who had acted in the same way, was now abated in its fury, he forwarded a letter to his father, at Winburn Priory, announcing his intention of venturing home in a few days, and begging his forgiveness and protection until his pardon could be procured. He, however, intimated to Willie Galloway his desire to secure the hand of Helen before he left.

"Weel, if she be agreeable," said Willie—"and I hae every reason to believe she is—I wadna blame ye for takin that step ava; for her auld gowk o' a guardian, Laird Howison (though a very worthy man in some respecks), vows that he is determined to marry her himsel, as soon as she is ane-and-twenty; and as he is up aboot London at present ye couldna hae a better opportunity. Therefore, only ye and Helen say the word, and I'll arrange the business for ye in less than nae time."

The fair maiden consented; a clergyman had joined their hands, and pronounced the benediction over them—the ceremony was concluded, but it was only concluded, when the two ruffians, who have been already mentioned as hired by Norton to search for him and secure his apprehension, and who before had met him by the side of the Solway, followed by two soldiers, burst into the apartment, crying—"Secure the traitor! It is he!—Harry Blackett!"

Helen screamed aloud and clasped her hands.

"Ye lie! ye lie!" cried Willie—"it is my sister's son; meddle wi' him wha daur, and us twa will fecht you four, even in the presence o' the minister."

So saying, he seized hold of a chair, and raised it to repel them. Henry followed his example. The soldiers threateningly raised their fire-arms. Willie suddenly swang round the chair with his utmost strength, and dashed down their arms. Henry hastily kissed the brow of his fair bride, and rushing through the midst of them, darted from the house, while Willie, as rapidly following him, closed the door behind him, and holding it fast, cried—"Run, Harry, my lad! —run for bare life, and I'll keep them fast here!"

For several days the soldiers searched the neighbourhood for the fugitive; but they found him not, and no one knew where he had fled. Within a week Helen disappeared from Primrose Hall, the seat of her guardian, Laird Howison, and the general belief was that she had set out for Cheshire, to the father of her bridegroom, to intercede with him to use his influence in his son's behalf. "And," said Willie, "if she doesna move him to forgie his son, and do his duty towards him, then I say that he has a heart harder than a whin-rock."

But no one knew the object of her departure, nor whither she had gone. Laird Howison had not returned; and after several weeks had passed, and Willie Galloway was unable to hear ought of either Helen or Henry, he resolved to proceed to Cheshire, to make inquiries after them; and for this purpose purchased an entire suit of new and fashionable raiment.

CHAPTER III.

On a beautiful summer morning an old man, slightly stooping in his gait, was slowly walking down a green lane which led in the direction from Warrington to Winburn Priory. Behind him, at a rapid pace, followed a younger man of a muscular frame, exceedingly well dressed, and carrying over his arm a thick chequered plaid, like those worn in the pastoral districts of Scotland. He overtook the elder pedestrian, and accosted him, saying—

"Here's a bonny morning, freend."

"Sir?" said the old man inquiringly, slightly lifting his hat, and not exactly comprehending his companion.

"Losh, but he's a mannerly auld body that," thought the other; "I see the siller upon this suit o' claes has been weel-wared;" and added aloud, "I was observing it's a delightful morning, sir, and as delightful a country-side; it wad be a paradise, were it no sae flat."

"Ah, sir!" replied the old man; "but I fear as how the country looks like a paradise without its innocence."

"Ye talk very rationally, honest man," said the other, whom the reader will have recognized to be Willie Galloway; "and, if I am no mistaen, ye maun hae some cause to mak the remark. But, dear me, sir, only look round ye, and see the trees in a' their glory, the flowers in a' their innocence; or just look at the rowing burn there, wimplin alang by oor side, like refined silver, bencath a sun only less glorious than the Hand that made it; and see who the bits o' fish are whittering round, wagging their tails, and whisking back and forrit, as happy as kings! Look at the lovely and the cheerfu' face o' a' Nature—or just listen to the music o' thae sinless creatures in the hedges, and in the blue

lift—and ye will say that, but for the inventions and deceitfulness o' man's heart, this earth would be a paradise still. But I tell ye what, freend—I believe that were an irreligious man just to get up before sunrise at a season like this, and gang into the fields and listen to the laverock, and look round on the earth, and on the majesty o' the heavens rising, he wadna stand for half an hoor until, if naebody were seeing him, he would drap doun on his knees and pray."

Much of Willie's sermon was lost on the old man; he, however, comprehended a part, and said, "Why, sir, I know as how I always find my mind more in tune for the service of the church by a walk in the fields, and the singing of the birds, than by all the instruments of the orchestra."

"Orchestra!" said Willie, "what do ye mean?—that's a strange place to gather devotion frae!"

"The orchestra of the church," returned the other.

"The orchestra o' the church!" said Willie, in surprise—"what's that? I never heard o't before. There's the poopit and the precentor's desk, the pews and the square seats, and doun stairs and the gallery—but ye nonplus me about the orchestra."

"Why, our lord of the manor," continued the old man, "is one who cares for nothing that's good, and he will give nothing; and as we are not rich enough to buy an organ, we have only a bass viol, two tenors, and a flute."

"Fiddles and a flute in a place o' worship!" exclaimed Willie.

"Yes, sir," replied the other, marvelling at his manner.

"Weel," returned Willie, standing suddenly still, and striking his staff upon the ground, "that beats a'! And will ye tell me, sir, hoo it is possible to worship yer Creator by scraping catgut or blawing wind through a hollow stick?"

"Why, master," said the old man, "the use of instruments in worship is as old as the times of the prophets, and I can't see why it should be given up. But dost thou think, now, that thou couldst go into Chester cathedral at twilight, while the organ filled all round about thee with its deep music, without feeling in thy heart that thou wast in a house of praise. Why, sir, at such a time thou couldst not commit a wicked action. The very sound, while it lifted up thy soul with delight, would awe thee."

When their controversy had ended, Willie inquired—"Do ye ken a family o' the name o' Blackett that lives aboot this neeborhood?"

"I should," answered the old man; "forty years did I eat of their bread."

"Then, after sic lang service, ye'll just be like ane o' the family?" replied Willie.

"Alas!" said the other, shaking his head.

"Ye dinna mean to say," resumed Willie, in a tone of surprise, "that they hae turned ye aff, in your auld age, as some heartless wretch wad sell the noble animal that had carried him when a callant, to a cadger, because it had grown howe-backet, and lost its speed o' foot. But I hope that young Mr. Henry had nae hand in it?"

"Henry!—no!—no!" cried the old man eagerly—"bless him! Did you know Mr. Henry, your honour?"

"I did," said Willie; "and I hae come from Scotland ance errand to see him."

"But, sir," inquired the old man, tremulously, "do you know where to find him?"

"I expect to find him, by this time, at his father's house."

"Alas!" answered the old domestic, "there has been no one at the Priory for more than twelve months. I don't know where the old knight is. Henry has not been here since he went to Edinburgh, and that is nigh to five years gone now."

"Ye dumfounder me, auld man," exclaimed Willie; "but where, in the name o' guidness, where's the wife?—where's Mrs. Blackett?"

"You will mean your countrywoman, I suppose," said the other.

"To be sure I mean her," said Willie—"wha else could I mean?"

"Ah! wo is me!" sighed his companion, and he burst into tears as he spoke, "dost see the churchyard just before us?—and they have raised no stone to mark the spot."

"Dead!" ejaculated Willie, becoming pale with horror, and fixing upon his fellow-pedestrian a look of agony—"Ye dinna say—dead!"

"Even so!—even so!" said the old domestic, sobbing aloud.

"And hoo was it?" cried Willie; "was it a fair strae death—or just grief, puir thing, just grief?"

"Why, I can't say how it was," answered his informant; "but I wish I durst tell all I think."

"Say it!—say it!" exclaimed Willie, vehemently, "what do ye mean by, if you durst say all ye think? If there be the shadow o' foul play, I will sift it to the bottom, though it cost me a thousand pounds; and there is anither that will gie mair."

"Ah, sir, I am but a friendless old man," replied the other, "that could not stand the weight of a stronger arm."

"Plague take their arms!" cried Willie, handling his cudgel, as if to shew the strength of his own—"tell what ye think, and they'll have strong arms that dare touch a hair o' yer head."

"Well, master," was the reply, "I don't like to say too much to strangers, but if thou makest any stay in these parts I may tell thee something; and I fear that wherever poor Henry is, he is in need of friends. But perhaps your honour would wish to see her grave?"

"Her grave!" ejaculated Willie—"yes! yes! yes!—her grave!—O misery! have I come frae Dumfries-shire to see a sicht like this?"

The old man led the way over the stile, hanging his head and sighing as he went. Willie followed him, drawing his sleeve across his eyes, as was his custom when his heart was touched, and forgetting the dress of the gentleman which he wore, in the feelings of the man.

"The family vault is in yonder corner," said his conductor, as they turned across the churchyard.

"Save us, friend!" exclaimed Willie, looking towards the spot, "saw ye ever the like o' yon?—a poor miserable dementit creature, wringing his hands as though his heart would break!"

"'Tis he! 'tis he!" shouted the old man, springing forward with the alacrity of youth, "my child!—my dear young master?"

"Oh! conscience o' man!" exclaimed Willie, "what sort o' a dream is this? It canna be possible! *Her* dead, and *him* oot o' his judgment, mourning owre her grave in the garb o' a beggar!"

"Ha! discovered again!" cried Henry fiercely, and starting round as he spoke; but immediately recognising the old domestic, on whom time had not wrought such a metamorphosis as dress had upon Willie Galloway—"Ha, Jonathan! old Jonathan Holditch!" he added, "do I again see the face of a friend!" and instantly discovering Willie, he sprang forward and grasped his extended hand in both of his.

The old man sat down upon the grave and wept.

"Don't weep, Jonathan," said Henry, "I trust that we shall soon have cause to rejoice."

"I wish a' may be richt yet," thought Willie; "I took

him to be rather dementit at the first glance, and *rejoice* is rather a strange word to use owre a young wife's grave. Puir fellow!"

"Yes, Master Henry," said Jonathan, "I do rejoice that the worst is past; but I must weep too, for there be many things in all this that I do not understand."

"Nor me either," said Willie; "but ye say ye think more than ye dare tell."

"Why is it, Jonathan," continued Henry, "that there is no stone to mark my mother's grave? There is room enough in our burial place. Why is there nothing to her memory?" he continued, bending his eyes upon her sepulchre. "Her *memory!*" he added; "cold, cruel grave; and is memory all that is left me of such a parent? Is the dumb dust, beneath this unlettered stone—all!—all! that I can now call mother? Has she no monument but the tears of her only surviving child?"

"A' about his mother," muttered Willie, "who has been dead for four years, and no a word aboot puir Helen! As sure as I'm a living man this is beyont my comprehension—I dinna think he can be *a'thegither there!*"

Henry turned towards him and said, "I have much to ask, my dear friend, but my heart is so filled with griefs and forebodings already, that the words I would utter tremble on my tongue; but what of my Helen—tell me, what of her?"

"She—she's—weel," gasped Willie, bewildered; "that is—I—I hope—I trust—that—oh, losh, Mr Blackett, I dinna ken whar I am, nor what I am saying, for my brain is as daized as a body's that is driven owre wi' a drift, and rowed amang the snaw! Has there been onybody buried here lately?"

"Mr Galloway!—Mr Galloway!" exclaimed Henry, half-choked with agitation, and wringing his hand in his, while the perspiration burst upon his brow—"in the name of wretchedness—what—what do you mean?"

"Oh, dinna speak to me!" said Willie, waving his hand; 'ask that auld man."

"Jonathan?" exclaimed Henry.

"I don't know what the gentleman means," said the old man; "but no one has been buried here since your honoured mother, and that is four years ago."

"And whase grave—whase grave did ye bring me to look at?" inquired Willie, eagerly.

"My lady's," answered he.

"Yer leddy's!" returned Willie—"do ye mean Mr Blackett's mother?"

"Whom else could I mean?" asked old Jonathan, in a tone of wonder.

"Wha else could you mean!" repeated Willie; "then, be thankit! *she's* no dead!—ye say *she's* no dead!" and he literally leapt for joy.

"Who dead?" inquired the old man, with increased astonishment.

"Wha dead, ye stupid auld body!—did I no say *his wife*, as plain as I could speak?"

"*Whose* wife?" inquired Jonathan, looking from Willie to his master in bewilderment.

"Whose wife!" reiterated Willie, weeping, laughing, and twirling his stick; "shame fa' ye—ye may ask that noo, after knocking my heart oot o' the place o't wi' yer palaver. Whase wife do ye say?—ask Mr Henry."

"Mr Galloway!" interrupted Henry, "am I to understand that you believed this to be the grave of my beloved Helen?—or, how could you suppose it? Has she left Primrose Hall?—or, has our marriage——Tell me all you know, for I wist not what I would ask."

Willie then related to him what the reader already knows—namely, that she had left Dumfriesshire, and was supposed to have gone to his father's.

"Blessings on the day that these eyes beheld the dear lady, then," exclaimed old Jonathan; "for I could vow that she is under my roof now"

"Under *your* roof!" cried Henry.

"Was ye doited, auld man, that ye didna tell me that before?" said Willie.

"I knew no more of my young master's marriage, until just now, than these gravestones do," said Jonathan; "the dear lady who is with us told nothing to me. Only my wife told me that she knew she loved our young master."

"But why is she lodging with you, Jonathan? I have learned that my father is abroad, and is it that he is soon expected home?"

"A fever caused her to be an inmate of my poor roof," answered Jonathan, "after she had been rudely driven from the gate as a common beggar. But I am no longer thy father's servant—and I wish, for thy sake, I could forget he was thy father; for he has done that which might make the blessed bones beneath our feet start from their grave. And there is no one about the Priory now, but the creatures of the villain Norton."

Henry entreated that the old man would not speak harshly of his father, though he had so treated them; and he briefly informed them, that, on flying from Scotland to escape his pursuers, even at his father's lodge, he again met one of the individuals who had hunted him as "Blackett, the traitor," and who had attempted to seize him in the hour of his marriage—and that even there the cry was again raised against him; and a band, thirsting for his blood-money, joined in the pursuit. He had fled to the churchyard, and found concealment in the family vault, where he had remained until they then discovered him, as, in the early morning, he had ventured out.

Willie counselled that there was now small vengeance to be apprehended from the persecution of the government; and when Jonathan stated that Sir John had married the daughter of Norton and disinherited Henry by denying his marriage with his mother, Willie exclaimed—"I see it a', Mr Henry, just as clear as the A, B, C. This rascal, ye ca' Norton, or your faither, (forgie me for saying sae,) has employed the villains wha hunted for yer life; it has been mair them than the government that has been to blame. Therefore, my advice is, let us go and drive the thieves out o' the house by force."

Henry, who was speechless with grief, horror, and disgust, agreed to the proposition of his friend, and they proceeded to the Priory by a shorter road than the lodge.

Henry knocked loudly at the door, which was opened by a man-servant, who attempted to shut it in his face; but, in a moment, the door was driven back upon its hinges, and the menial lay extended along the lobby; and Henry with his sturdy ally and old Jonathan, rushed in. Alarmed by the sound, the other servants, male and female, hurried to the spot; and epithets, too opprobrious to be written, were the mildest they applied to the young heir, as he demanded admission.

"Then let us gie them club-law for it," cried Willie, "if they will have it; and they shall have it to their hearts content, if I ance begin it."

Armed with such weapons as they could seize at the moment, the servants menacingly opposed their entrance; but Henry, dashing through them, rushed towards the stairs where he was followed by four men-servants, two armed with swords, and the others with kitchen utensils.

But Willie, following at their heels, cried—"Come back!" and, bringing his cudgel round his head, with one tremendous swoop caused it to rattle across the unprotected limbs of the two last of the pursuers, and, almost at the

same instant, before their comrades had ascended five steps from the ground, they, from the same cause, descended backwards, rolling and roaring over their companions. Within three seconds, all four were conquered, disarmed, and unable to arise. As the discomfited garrison of the Priory gathered themselves together, (much in the attitude of Turks or tailors,) groaning, writhing, and ruefully rubbing their stockings, Willie, with the composed look of a philosopher, addressed to them this consoling and important information—"Noo, sirs, I hope ye are a' *sensibly* convinced, what guid service a bit hazel may do in a willing hand; and if ony o' yer banes are broken, I would recommend ye to send for the doctor before the swelling gets stiff about them. But ye couldna hae broken banes at a cannier place on a' the leg than just where I gied ye the bits o' clinks; they were hearty licks, and would gie them a clean snap, so that, in the matter o' six weeks, ye may be on your feet again."

Old Jonathan had already followed Henry up stairs; and Willie having finished his exhortation, proceeded in quest of them. Henry succeeded in obtaining a change of raiment; and having sent for one who had been long a tenant upon the estate, he left the house in charge to him, with orders that he should immediately turn from it all the creatures of Norton, and engage other servants; and he and his friend, Willie, proceeded to the house of old Jonathan, where, as the latter supposed, a lady that he believed to be the wife of his young master, then was.

CHAPTER IV

Mrs Holditch (the wife of old Jonathan) was wandering up the lane in quest of her husband, wondering at the length of his absence, and fretting for his return; for "the sweet lady," as she termed Helen, "would not take breakfast without them." She had proceeded about half a mile from the cottage, when she was met by none other than Laird Howison of Primrose Hall, and the following dialogue took place:—

"Will ye hae the kindness to inform me, ma'am, if the person that used to keep the gate of Sir John Blackett lives ony way aboot here?"

"He does, sir," replied she, with low obeisance.

"And, oh!" interrupted he, earnestly, "know ye if there be a young leddy frae Scotland stopping there at present—for I have heard that there is? Ye'll no think me inquisitive, ma'am; for really if ye kenned what motive I hae for asking, ye would think it motive enough."

"There be, your honour," returned she, "and a dear excellent young lady she is."

"Oh! if it be her that I mean," said he, "that she is *dear*, indeed, I have owre guid reason to ken, and her excellence is written on every line o' her beautiful countenance. But, if I'm no detaining ye, ma'am, may I just ask her name?"

"She bade us call her Helen, sir," replied she; "we know no other.'

"Yes! yes!" cried he, "it's just Helen!—Helen, and nothing else to me! Mony a time has that name been offered up wi' my prayers. But I thought, ma'am, ye said she bade *you* call her Helen."

"Yes, your honour," said she; "I be the wife of old Jonathan Holditch, and she be staying with us now."

'Bless you!" he exclaimed "for the shelter which yer roof has afforded to the head o an orphan. But, oh! what like is *your* Helen? Is her neck whiter than the drifted snaw? Does her hair fa' in gowden ringlets, like the clouds that curl round the brows o' the setting sun? Is her form delicate as the willow, but stately as the young pine? Is her countenance beautiful as the light o' laughing day, when it chases sickness and darkness together from the chamber o' the invalid? If she isna a' this—if her voice isna sweeter than the sough o' music on a river—dear and excellent she may be, and they may call her Helen—but, oh! she isna my *Helen!*—for there is none in the world like unto *mine*. But, no! no!—she is *not mine now!* O Helen, woman! did I expect this? Excuse me, ma'am, ye'll think my conduct strange; but, when my poor seared-up heart thinks o' past enjoyment, it makes me forget mysel'. Do ye think your Helen is the same that I hae come to seek?"

"A sweeter and a lovelier lady," said she, "never called Christian man father. She had business at Winburn Priory; but my husband says she was driven away from the gate like a dog."

"It is her!" exclaimed he, "and she's no been at the Priory, then?"

"No, sir," returned she.

"Nor seen ony o' the Blackett family?" added he, eagerly.

"No, sir; for there be none of them in the neighbourbourhood," answered she.

"What's this I hear!" cried he:—"Gracious! if I may again hope!—and why for no? But how is it that she is stopping wi' you?—wherefore did she not return to the home where she has been cherished from infancy, and where she will aye be welcome. Has Helen forgot me a'thegither?"

"Alas, sir!" said she; "it was partly grief, I believe, that brought on a bad fever, and I had fears the sweet, patient creature, would have died in my hands. I sat by her bedside, watching night after night; and, oh! sir, I daresay as how it was about you that that she sometimes talked, and wept, and laughed, and talked again. poor thing."

"And did *ye*," he inquired, fumbling with a pocket-book; "did *ye* watch owre her? I'm your debtor for that. And ye think she spoke about *me*—my name 's Howison, ma'am—Thomas Howison of Primrose Hall, in the county o' Dumfries. She would, maybe, call me *Thomas!*

"Mr Howison!" replied the old woman: "yes, your honour, she often mentioned such a name—very often."

"Did she really," added he; "did she mention me?—and often spoke about me—often? Then, she 's no forgotten me a'thegither!"

He thrust a bank-note into the hands of Mrs Holditch, which she refused to accept, saying that "the dear lady had more than paid her for all that she had done already." But, while she spoke, they had arrived within sight of the cottage, and he suddenly bounded forward, exclaiming "Oh! haud my heart!" as he beheld Helen, sitting looking from the window—"yonder she is! yonder she is! O Helen! Helen!" he cried, rushing towards the door—"wherefore did ye leave me?—why hae ye forsaken me? But, joy o' my heart, I winna upbraid ye; for I hae found ye again."

With an agitated step, she advanced to meet him—she extended her hand towards him—she faltered—'My kind, kind benefactor."

He heard the words she uttered—with a glance he beheld the marriage-ring upon her finger—he stood still in the midst of his transport—his outstretched arms fell motionless by his side—"O Helen, woman!" he cried in

agony, "do ye really say *benefactor?*—that isna the word I wish to hear frae ye. Ye never ca'ed me *benefactor* before!"

The few words spoken by the old woman had called up his buried hopes; but the word *benefactor* had again whelmed him in despair.

"Oh!" he continued, dashing away the tears from his eyes, "my poor mind is flung away upon a whirlwind, and my brain is the sport o' every shadow! O Helen! I thought ye had forgotten me!"

"Forgotten you, my kind dear friend!" said she; "I have not, I will not, I cannot forget you; and wherefore would you forget that I can only remember you as a friend?"

"Poor, miserable, and deluded being that I am," added he; "I expected, from what the mistress o' this house told me, that I wouldna be welcomed by the cauldrife names o' *friend* or *benefactor*. Do ye mind since ye used to call me *Thomas?*"

"Mr Howison," answered she, "I know this visit has been made in kindness—let me believe in parental anxiety. You have not now to learn that I am a wife, and you can have heard nothing here to lead you to think otherwise. I will not pretend to misunderstand your language. But by what name can I call you save that of friend?—it was the first and the only one by which I have ever known you."

"No, Helen," cried he, wringing her hand; "there was a time when ye only said *Thomas!* and the sound o' that ae word frae yer lips was a waff o' music, which echoed, like the vibrations o' an angel's harp, about my heart for hours and for hours!"

"If," added she, "from having been taught by you to call you by that name in childhood, when I regarded you as my guardian, and you condescended to be my playmate, will you upbraid me with ceasing to use it now, when respect to you and to myself demand the use of another? Or can you, by any act of mine, place another meaning upon my having used it, than obedience to your wishes, and the familiarity of a thoughtless girl? And, knowing this, is it possible that the best of men will heap sorrow upon sorrow on the head of a friendless and afflicted woman?"

"Oh, dinna say friendless, Helen," cried he; "friendless ye canna be while I am in existence. Ye hae torn the scales from my eyes, and the first use o' sicht has been to shew me that the past has been delusion, and that the future is misery, solitary madness, or despair! And hae I really a' this time mistaen sweetness for love, and familiarity for affection? Do ye really say that it was only familiarity, Helen?"

"The feelings of a sister for a brother," she answered; "of a daughter for a father."

"True," said he; "I see it now; I was, indeed, older than your father—I didna recollect that."

He sat thoughtful for a few minutes, when Helen, to change the subject, inquired after her old nurse, Janet White.

"Poor body," said he, raising his head, "her spirits are clean gone. I understand she sits mourning for you by the fire, cowering thegither like a pigeon that's lost its mate, or a ewe whose lamb has been struck dead by its side. It would wring tears from a heart o' stane to hear her lamenting, morning, noon, and night, for her 'dear bairn,' as she aye ca'ed ye—rocking her head and chirming owre her sorrow, like a hen bird owre its rifled nest. I had her owre at the Hall the day after I cam back frae London, and just afore I cam here to seek for ye. But there is naething aboot it that she taks delight in noo. And, when I strove to amuse her, by taking her through the garden and plantations, (though I stood mair in need o' comfort mysel',) she would stand still and lean her head against a tree, in the very middle o' some o' the bonniest spots, while a tear came rowing down her cheeks, and look in my face wi' such a sorrowfu' expression, that a thousand arrows, entering my breast at ance, couldna hae caused me mair agony. I felt that I was a puir, solitary, and despised being, only cast into the midst o' a paradise, that my comfortless bosom might appear the blacker and the more dismal. The puir auld body saw what was passing within me, and she shook her head, saying, 'Oh, sir! had I seen ye leading my bairn down thir bonny avenues as your wife, Janet White would have been a happy woman.' Then she wrung her withered hands, and the tears hailed down her cheeks faster and faster; while I hadna a word o' consolation to say to her, had it been to save my life. For the very chirping o' the birds grew irksome, and the young leaves and the silky flowers painful to look upon. O Helen! if ye only kenned what we a suffer on yer account! If ye only kenned what it is to have hope spired up, and affection preying upon your ain heart for nourishment, ye wadna be angry at onything I say."

"Think not it is possible," she replied, while her tears flowed faster than her words; "but wherefore feed a hopeless passion, the indulgence of which is now criminal?"

"Oh! forgie ye!" he exclaimed, vehemently; "dinna say that, Helen! Hopeless it may be, but not *criminal!* That is the only cruel word I ever heard frae yer lips! I didna think onybody would hae said that to me! Did you really say *criminal?* But, oh! as matters stand, if ye'd only alloo me to say anither word or twa anent the subject, and if ye wadna just crush me as a moth, and tak pleasure in my agonies—or hae me to perish wi' the sunless desolation o my ain breast—ye'll allow me to say them. They relate to my last consolation—the last tie that links me and the world together!"

"Speak," said Helen; 'let not me be the cause of misery I can have power to prevent."

"Oh, then!" replied he, "be not angry at what I'm going to say; and mind, that, on your answer depends the future happiness or misery o' a fellow being. Yes, Helen! upon your word depends life and hope—madness and misery I say life and hope—for, if ye destroy the one, the other winna haud lang oot; and I say madness—for, oh! if ye had been a witness o' the wild and the melancholy days and nights that I hae passed since I learned that ye had left me, and felt my heart burning and beating, and my brain loup, louping for ever, like a living substance, and shooting and stinging through my head, like stings o' fire, till I neither kenned whar I was, nor what I did; but stood still, or rushed out in agony, and screamed to the wind, or gripped at the echo o' my voice!—I say, if ye had seen this, ye wadna think it strange that I made use o' the words. And now, as ye have heard nothing from——from Henry Blackett, from the night that the ceremony o' marriage was performed—and if ye should hear nothing o' him for seven years to come, ye will then, ye ken, be at liberty—and will ye say that I may hope, then? O Helen, woman! say but the word, and I'll wait the seven years, as Jacob did for Rachel, and count them but a day if my Helen will bless me wi' a smile o' hope!"

As he thus spoke, Mrs Holditch bustled into the room, exclaiming—"O sweet lady, here be one coming thee knows—see! see! there be my husband, and our own dear young master Henry, come to make us happy again!"

"My Henry!" exclaimed Helen, springing towards the door—"where—oh, where?"

"Here, my beloved! here!" replied Henry, meeting her on the threshold.

Poor Laird Howison stood dumb, his mouth open, his eyes extended, staring on vacancy. He beheld the object of his delirious love sink into her husband's arms, and saw no more. He clasped his hands together, and, with a deep groan, reeled against the wall. Henry and Helen, in the ecstasy of meeting each other, were unconscious of all around, and Willie Galloway was the first to observe his countryman.

"Preserve us! you here, too, Mr Howison!" said he. But the features of the laird remained rivetted in agony, and betrayed no symptom of recognition. The mention of the laird's name by Willie, arrested the attention of Henry, and approaching him, he said—"Sir, to you I ought to offer an apology."

The unhappy man wildly grasped the hand of Henry, and seizing also Helen's, he exclaimed—"It is a' owre now! The chain is forged, and the iron is round my soul. But I bless you baith. Tak her! tak her!—and hear me, Henry Blackett—as ye would escape wrath and judgment, be kind to her as the westlin' winds and the morning dews to the leaves o' spring. Let it be your part to clothe her countenance wi' smiles and her bosom wi' joy! Fareweel, Helen!—look up!—let me, for the last time, look upon your face, and I will carry that look upon my memory to the grave!"

She gazed upon him wildly, crying—"Stay!—stay!—you must not leave us!"

"Now!—now, it is past!" he cried; "it was a sair truggle, but reason mastered it! Fareweel, Helen!—fareweel!"

Thus saying, he rushed out of the house, and Willie Galloway followed him; but, although fleet of foot, he was compelled to give up the pursuit.

A few minutes after the abrupt and wild departure of the laird, and before Helen had recovered from the shock, the ruffians, who, at the instigation of Norton, had hunted after Henry to deliver him up to the government, and from whom he had already twice escaped, rushed into the room, exclaiming—"Secure the traitor!"

Henry sprang back to defend himself, and Willie Galloway, who had returned, threw himself into a pugilistic attitude. But Helen, stepping between her husband and his pursuers, drew a paper from her bosom, and placing it in his hands, said—"My Henry is free! he is pardoned!—the king hath signed it!—laugh at the bloodhounds!" And, as she spoke, she sank upon his breast. He opened the paper; it was his pardon under the royal signature and the royal seal! "My own!—my wife!—my wife!" cried Henry, pressing her to his heart, and weeping on her neck.

"That crowns a'," exclaimed Willie Galloway; "O Helen!—what a lassie ye are!"

The ruffians slunk from the room in confusion, and Willie informed them that the sooner they were out of sight it would be the better for them.

Helen, on leaving Scotland, had proceeded to London, where, through the interest of a friend of Laird Howison's, she gained access to the Duke of Cumberland, and throwing herself at his feet, had, through him, obtained her husband's pardon, and that pardon she had carried next her bosom to his father's house, hoping to find him there.

Having divided this tale into chapters, we now come to the

CONCLUSION.

Henry being now pardoned, Willie Galloway advised that he should take his wife to his father's house, and remain there, adding—"Mind ye, Maister Henry, that possession is nine points o' law—and if ye be in want o' the matter o' five hundred pounds for present use, or for mair to prove your birthright at law, I am the man that will advance it, and that will leave no stone unturned till I see you righted."

Willie's suggestion was acted upon; and Henry and Helen took up their abode in the Priory, where they had been but a few weeks, when he obtained information that his father had fallen in a duel, and that his adversary was none other than Squire Norton, the father of his then wife; but with his dying breath, he declared, in the presence of his seconds, and invoked them to record it, that his injured son Henry was his only and lawful heir.

"That," exclaimed Norton, with a savage laugh over his dying antagonist, "it will cost him some trouble to prove!"

The murderer, in the name of a child which his daughter had borne to Sir John, had the hardihood to enter lega proceedings to obtain the estate.

Henry applied to the parish of Glencleugh for the register of his mother's marriage; but no such record was found. Old Dugald Mackay had a dreamy recollection of such a marriage taking place; but he said—"It pe very strange that it isna in te pook; hur canna swear to it."

Many thought that the day would be given against Henry, and pitied him; but before judgment was pronounced in the case, young Norton was found guilty of forgery, and condemned to undergo the last severity of the law. Previous to his ignominious death, in the presence of witnesses, he confessed the injury he had done to Henry by tearing the leaves from the parish register, and directed where they might be found. They were found—old Norton fled from the country, and Henry obtained undisputed possession of the estate; but on his father's widow and child he settled a competency.

Laird Howison's sorrow moderated as his years increased; and when Henry and Helen had children, and when they had grown up to run about, he requested that they should be sent to him every year, to pull the primroses around Primrose Hall; and they were sent. One of them, a girl, the image of her mother, he often wept over, and said, he hoped to live to love her, as he had loved her mother. Willie Galloway often visited his friends in Cheshire, and remained "canny Willie" to the end of the chapter.



LEAVES
FROM THE
LIFE OF ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

EVERY reader has heard of the infamous speculation which is still known by the name of the South Sea Bubble. It produced a mania in the mercantile world, and brought ruin and misery to the hearths of thousands. Many who laid their head upon their pillow at night believing themselves to be rich awoke beggars in the morning. Now, at the time when the South Sea scheme was at its height, there resided in Newcastle a Mr Hamilton, who had come from the neighbourhood of Peebles, when but a mere boy, as a clerk to a merchant; but he possessed much of the caution, the sobriety, and the prudence for which many of his countrymen are noted; and he not only obtained the confidence of his employers, but rose to be an eminent merchant himself. For more than thirty years he carried on business prosperously; he was believed to be wealthy, and he was so. But he had always been a speculative man, one whose temperament was too ardent, and he entered into the South Sea project with his whole heart, embarking in it his entire capital. He was a widower, and had an only son, named Alexander, who, at the age of twenty-one, he took into partnership with himself. The senior Mr Hamilton was a man who well knew the painful labour attending self-teaching, for he had himself experienced it; and, though he had always intended his son to be a merchant, he had sent him to Cambridge for his education, saying, "A British merchant is a citizen of the world, and stands in greater need of more languages than one, than a divine does. Therefore, my son shall be a scholar."

Alexander accordingly passed through his academical studies with credit to himself; and, as has been said, when he had attained the age of twenty-one, his father took him into partnership. But before he was twenty-three he married Isabella Anderson, the daughter of a gentleman who was then his father's principal clerk, but who had himself been an extensive merchant, until misfortune reduced him to the situation which he then occupied. She was somewhat younger than Alexander; and although a lovely girl, yet her virtues and the sweetness of her temper far exceeded her personal attractions. The elder Mr Hamilton, being aware of her many excellent qualities, though he knew her to be portionless, was not averse to her marriage with his son. But they had not been married twelve months, when the high-blown bubble burst, and the old merchant found himself a beggar. He took it deeply to heart, and, in the language of the mercantile world, he never raised his head again; but he sat sighing and pining away, like a broken-hearted child, and within six weeks he sank into the grave a ruined man.

Alexander, finding that the firm was indeed bankrupt, and that there was but little prospect of his again succeeding in Newcastle, where his pride revolted from becoming the servant of others, left his young wife with her father, and proceeded to London, where he doubted not but that amongst those who had received from his parent many thousands of pounds, he should soon be enabled to obtain a situation which would enable him to support himself and his Isabella in comfort.

His purse was, in truth, light when he arrived in the metropolis; and having taken lodgings in a mean coffee-house in Ratcliffe Highway, he despatched a note to a gentleman with whom they had dealt extensively, and, without entering into particulars, requested the loan of twenty pounds. He wrote, because he was conscious that he had not the assurance to solicit the favour personally; and he did solicit it, knowing that, before he could obtain a situation in London, money to support him in the interim was necessary. From that gentleman he received an answer by the bearer of his own note, in which no notice was taken of his father's misfortunes or death; but the writer penned his reply as though he were aware of neither, and expressed his regret that, during the day, a circumstance occurred which deprived him of the pleasure he should have felt in serving Mr Hamilton and that he was extremely sorry he could not then accommodate him with the trifle he requested. He added, in continuance, that he supposed, from the place from whence Mr Hamilton's letter was dated, that his embarrassment proceeded from some youthful frolic, and he considered that the best method of discharging the debts of such creditors, was to give their persons over to the power of the magistrates.

"Such, then," exclaimed Alexander, tearing the letter in pieces, "such is the friendship of this world!"

He was aware that the person to whom he had written was acquainted with the ruined fortunes of his house; and it was gall to his spirit to find that he not only wrote as if ignorant of them, but addressed him with the unfeeling familiarity of cold politeness, attributing to the folly of youth what he well knew to be the effect of misery and ruin.

He applied to another without obtaining any answer whatever; and the third to whom he applied, having read his note, sent a verbal message by the bearer, saying, "Tell Mr Hamilton that Mr ——— is not at home."

Indignant at the treatment of supposed friends, on the evening of the second day he discharged his bill at the coffee-house, (on doing which he had but a few shillings left,) and resolved to call personally upon an old college associate who had been often obliged to him, and who then was indebted to him more than a hundred pounds. This university companion, after coming of age, had fitted up a house in a style of absurd extravagance in Leicester Square.

I should have told you that, previous to Alexander's proceeding to London, he had been compelled to dispose of the best part of his apparel to support his wife and himself, and, at the time we speak of, his appearance was what ought to be termed *shabby genteel*. He proceeded to the house of his friend, and striking upon the huge brass knocker, in the absence of the porter, a pert little French valet, with powdered hair, peeped cautiously from behind the door, and surveying him with a glance of aversion and contempt, in which he no doubt set him down to be a dun, he inquired—"Vat you vant, fellow?"

"The Honourable Edward Stafford, your master," said Alexander, firmly.

"Mon Dieu! ha! ha! ha!" said the little Gaul, and attempted to thrust the door in his face; but Alexander, perceiving his intention, thrust forth his hand with a force that made the door fly back upon its hinges, and caused the huge brass knocker to sound an unusual and unceremonious alarm through the house, and at the same time drove the little powdered piece of foreign impertinence upon his back at the further end of the lobby.

"Moorder! moorder!" shouted the little valet, sprawling upon his back, and kicking with his feet upon the floor, till kitchen-maids, housekeeper, cook, butler, and all the personages in the Honourable Edward Stafford's establishment came rushing around him, holding up their hands.

"*O sacra Marie!*" cried the little valet, as they raised him to his feet; "de tief! de savage! vould commit von moorder!—*Ma foi!* it be de miracle I be alive!" and, gathering himself upon his hands and knees, he muttered, eyeing him askance—"*Je voudrais qu'il s'en allat!*"

The Honourable Edward Stafford rushed also to the lobby, arrayed in a dressing-gown, having sprung from the hands of a hair-dresser, who was performing a piece of work upon his ringlets for which he did not consider the valet qualified; and, to give additional effect to the figure which he now made in the midst of his servants, he appeared with the one side of his head in curls, while a comb was left sticking in the other.

"What! in the name of the Tower of Babel!" cried, or rather squeaked Mr Stafford—"what is the meaning of this?"

Alexander, whose natural humour returned at the risible scene before him, approached smiling; and, extending his hand, said—"What! don't you know me, Ned?"

"Back! back!" exclaimed the honourable and gentle Edward Stafford; "the effluvia of thy garments is poison to my nostrils! Faugh!—know thee—why, thou art a moving tar barrel!" There was some cause for this last remark; for Alexander had slept with the common seamen during his passage to London, and his clothes yet bore witness to the pitchy fragrance of his bed-chamber. But Mr Stafford calling for an opera-glass, raised it to his eye, and, surveying him for a few moments, inquired—"Why, who are you? Your face—I have seen it somewhere! Who are you?"

"Have you forgot Cambridge and Alexander Hamilton?" said the other.

"Sandy Hamilton!" exclaimed Stafford, rising an inch, as if in surprise—"we always called you Sandy. But, come, let me hear this lark—'tis a prime one, I will vow, from your appearance; and yet you were no lad for life either," he added, as he coldly held out his forefinger, and turned to conduct him into an apartment.

Alexander, having related to him his present situation, requested from him payment of such a portion of his college debt as he might find convenient.

"A plaguy odd affair, 'pon my honour!" drawled out Stafford; "but I'm sorry I can't oblige you just at this moment. Never was a poor dog so confoundedly dunned! I am obliged to bilk the bailiffs at every corner. 'Pon my word, Sandy, I have had as many *Bills of Middlesex* served upon me, within these six months, as would fill a stage coach! Nothing could be so provoking!—My rascal of a tailor, too, got a *Quare clausum* popped into my hands only this morning! Lost a cool five hundred last night, also! So, you see, I am involved on all sides. There is no way of redemption for me, that I can see, but taking a walk across Blackfriars. I do say that it is confoundedly hard that one can't oblige one's friends—but I hope you see, my dear fellow, that it is impossible. I am sorry for you, but I can't help it at present—you must see that plain enough. Only, at the same time, your outward man seems approaching to the third and fourth letters of the alphabet—and, if there be anything in my wardrobe that would be of service"———

Here he paused—and be it known, gentle reader, that the Honourable Edward Stafford was one of the most diminutive of men; and as he stood by the side of Alexander, the crown of his head did not reach his shoulder. He again proceeded—"But why, Sandy, you know, when you were at Cambridge you were the Apollo, nay, the Adonis, of all the heiresses and rich dowagers within seven leagues. Many of them are in town now, and would be glad of an opportunity."———

"Sir," said Alexander, reprovingly, "you forget that I am a husband."

"Yes, yes, so you are," drawled out Mr Stafford; "but that need not cause you to make sermons against your own preferment. I remember now, it was a low match—the daughter of one of your father's clerks! O Sandy! Sandy—I thought you had more spirit."

"Sir," replied Alexander, "my wife is the daughter of an honest man, whom you contributed to bring low and to ruin;" and, casting upon him a look of scorn, which caused the small gentleman to make precipitate retreat behind his chair, he added, with a sneer—"Farewell, Mr Stafford, and I wish you joy of your hopeful prospects." Thus saying, and without waiting a reply, he left the house.

It was now July, and one hope remained. A gentleman who held a seat in the House of Commons, and who owed his return to the money advanced by the late Mr Hamilton, and the activity and zeal of Alexander, professed to be touched by his misfortunes, and promised to obtain for him a situation under government, which was then vacant. The day on which he was to be installed into the office was named; and Alexander, in the fulness and gladness of his heart, wrote for Isabella to come to London.

It may here be as well to inform the reader that the Honourable Edward Stafford, of whom we have spoken, was connected with the Borders. As hinted by Alexander, he had been one of those who had contributed to the ruin of Isabella's father. But there was one circumstance which Alexander knew not, and which was, that, for some years prior to her marriage, the Honourable Edward Stafford had been her heartless persecutor, and as a villain had beset her path. The tale of her husband's misfortunes having rekindled his hopes, he proceeded to the north to renew his plots and persecutions.

It was early in August, when a vessel, on board of which there were many passengers, sailed from the quayside of Newcastle. The morning was clear, the sky cloudless, and the villages, on either side of the Tyne, appeared in summer beauty. They had passed Shields, the pilot departed, and wished them a pleasant passage; several ladies and gentlemen promenaded the deck, contemplating the scene. Isabella, unconscious of being observed by all, sat alone on the starboard side of the companion, her elbow resting by the top of the binnacle lamp, and her eyes fixed upon the shore.

While she thus sat, an imposing little personage, wearing a superb Spanish cloak, flung with what may be termed graceful negligence across his shoulders, and having a highly-flavoured cigar in his teeth, consequentially ascended the cabin stairs—looked knowingly towards the mast head—gave two or three springy struts across the after-deck—cast an aristocratical glance around the passengers—stood suddenly still—bent pryingly over the companion—stole round on tiptoe, tapped Isabella familiarly on the shoulder, and, throwing back his little body to its extreme altitude, he stretched out his parcel of white fingers, saying—"A study for a Rembrandt, by the Graces! I am a fortunate fellow in meeting you again; but didn't know, 'pon my honour, until lately, that my friend, Sandy Hamilton, had the happiness of being acquainted with you."

"Mr Stafford," said Isabella, "the wife of him whom you call your friend has hitherto been accustomed to plainer language."

"You are severe, my pretty paragon," whispered the little man; "but, now that you are leaving the north country in quest of a husband, do not disfigure that lovely face with north country formality."

And, casting aside both formality and delicacy himself, with the air of a wooer who presumes more upon his own importance than the feelings of her professed to be beloved, he seated himself by her side, and, with an affected and seemingly careless playfulness, threw his arm across her shoulder.

"Sir," said Isabella, rising indignantly, "you have this moment called my husband your friend—if you are ignorant of the sacred duties of a friend, or of the respect due to my sex, and the conduct becoming a gentleman, let the misfortunes of our house be my protection."

"Protection!—creature of beauty!" said he, "I will protect you with my life! Nay, do not frown; for your anger only makes your loveliness the more provoking, and calls back the colour which your misfortunes, as you term them, are trying to banish."

"Begone, Sir," said Isabella; "practise your fooleries on those who will listen to them;" and she walked to the opposite side of the vessel, whither she was immediately followed by her unabashed tormentor.

"Come, sweet one," resumed he, "do not delight in throwing lightnings from eyes where moonbeams would blush at the presence of rivals."

"Your behaviour, Sir," said Isabella, "in any man, but especially in one bearing the rank of a gentleman, is contemptible, cowardly, and unmanly. On former occasions I have borne your insults without drawing upon you the chastisements which you merited; but you now profess to know me as the wife of your friend, and as such I claim your respect—or I shall know how to resent your conduct."

"An angel in a fury!" exclaimed the Hon. Edward Stafford, with a theatrical start. "Respect you!—why, I adore you!—worship you!—will die for you!"

"Pitiable fool!" replied she, turning from him with disdain.

"Only the fool your eyes have made him, lovely cruelty!" rejoined he, following her, and extending his hand to lay hold of her arm.

"'Vast there, you chap!" cried the skipper—a round, red-faced, jolly-looking seaman, who had observed from the helm the conduct of Mr Stafford; "'vast there, I say—I'll have no monkey tricks on board o' my ship. That young lady is under my especial care; for, d'ye see, her father was once one o' my owners, and so was her husband and his father before him—and I just tell ye, ceevily, my canny lad, ye had better shove your boat off!"

"Fellow!" sneered Mr Stafford, surveying him with a look of contempt, "do you know to whom you speak?"

"I neither know nor care, young gentleman," replied the skipper; "but I'll let you know that neither you nor any man shall ca' me fellow, or use any indecent liberties on board my ship, so ye had better take in a reef, or keep a look-out for squalls."

"Heathen!—uncivilized Laplander!" fumed Mr Stafford, stamping his little foot upon the deck; "do you know, Sir, to whom you are opening your barbarian lips?"

"My wig! I'll tell ye what it is, young chap," vociferated the skipper, "I dinna care though ye were first cousin to the flying Dutchman; ye shall know I'm maister o' this vessel."

"Confound you and your vessel!" retorted the little man, stamping more passionately than before; "dare you open your frog's mouth to a gentleman?"

"Yo poor singet creature!—yo miserable button top!" rejoined the skipper, "has an insignificant object like you the assurance to confound anybody? Are you no feared that I wry your neck about like a cock-sparrow's? As sure as death, Sir, if ye drop another word o' your insolence to me I'll capsize ye under a bucket."

"You savage! you Greenland bear!" reiterated Mr Stafford, brandishing his clenched fist in the face of the other; "are gentlemen to endure the boorish insolence of a Hottentot like you? You'll capsize me under a bucket, will you? Look you, Sir, if you don't ask my pardon instantly, before the whole ship's company, Sir, I'll put a brace of bullets through your ass's head! I will, Sir! Do you think with your cowardly carcass to intimidate me? Were you as big as Goliath, I'll let you know I'm a gentleman, Sir!"

"Here, Jack, take the helm," roared the skipper to one of his crew; "and now, ye chattering morsel o' humanity, I'll let yo see whether you or I be the best gentleman in this ship, at any bat!"

He sprang forward, Edward Stafford sprang back, and the passengers sprang between them.

"Hands off, gentlemen, if you please!" said the skipper "remember I am master o' this vessel. I wud wish to be civil to everybody, but it is not in the power o' nature to put up wi' the impudence o' a creature like that; and though I'll no hurt him—smash me! he shall either haud his tongue, or he shall never speak more. Did ye hear such names as I put up wi'?"

"Unhand the ruffian, gentlemen!" cried Mr Stafford, who had retreated amid-ships, and felt his courage revive under the protection of half-a-dozen ladies. "Unhand the mountain of moving mud! I'll teach such fellows how to interfere with a gentleman! Unhand him, and I'll send him below with a piece of cold lead through his fin!" And heroically taking from his pocket a handsome silver-mounted ivory case, he placed it with a determined air upon the top of a beef cask, again exclaiming—"Don't hold him, gentlemen—these will do for him!"

"I tell ye again, Sirs," shouted the skipper, "don't hold me! Do you think a thing like that shall threaten to shoot me on board o' my own ship?" And he struggled to approach him.

"See to yourselves, gentlemen!" cried Mr Stafford, laying his hand fiercely upon the pistol-case.

"O Sir!—pray Sir!—dear Sir!"—screamed the ladies, grasping him in their arms.

"Oh, don't be alarmed," said the little Honourable; "'pon honour, I shall only wing him—I have had some experience in these matters."

The skipper made a desperate rush forward—the ladies screamed louder—Mr Stafford seized the pistol-case furiously, crying—"Then die, fellow!"——

His exclamation was cut short—a lady grasped the terrible pistol-case; it opened in the struggle, and the hateful weapons fell upon the deck, though not in the shape of pistols, but the honourable gentleman's sea-stock of cigars! The gentlemen laughed—the ladies tittered.

"It has ended in *smoke*, Sir," said a fair punster.

"You can still *fire* them!" added another.

And the skipper, laughing like the mirth of a hoarse wave, taking him firmly by the ear with his finger and thumb, said—"Gather them up, Sir—gather up your *fire-arms!*" And, as Mr Stafford persisted in disobeying, another twitch was given to his ear, and another and another, while he screamed and wept through passion and pain, danced and twisted to be free, to the amusement of the spectators, who enjoyed his punishment and humiliation.

"Sir," said Isabella, addressing his tormentor, the frantic cries of Mr Stafford having brought her from the cabin, where she retired at the beginning of their altercation; "if a fly sting us, we may drive it away, without taking pleasure in its tortures; and it is but a cowardly revenge to torment an insect."

"Well, ma'am," said the skipper, withdrawing his hand from the ear of the other; "I have no wish to hurt the thing; only, after his impudence to you as well as to mysel', he had better have a care what sort o' colours he hoists for the rest o' the passage—that's all." The agony and confusion of Mr Stafford cannot be described. He blushed, swore, threatened, and wept by turns—rushed to the cabin, hurried back, threw his card in the captain's face—stamped, stormed, and vowed vengeance, till he became silent from exhaustion. A few weeks before, he had left London for the north, partly to avoid the importunities of his creditors, whose claims had been discharged after his departure by the too fond indulgence of a foolish mother, but chiefly to carry into effect his long-cherished designs against the beautiful wife of his college companion, whose misfortunes caused him now to look upon her as an easy and lawful prize; and it was under this conviction that he watched her departure for London.

and took his passage in the same vessel. Mortified at the ridiculous figure he exhibited, he resolved to suspend all further attempts until they arrived at London.

But three days were not past, notwithstanding the misfortune of the pistol-case, until the Honourable Edward Stafford, through the assistance of self-confidence or impudence, with pretended wit and foppish extravagance, was again the principal personage in the vessel. His brandy, his claret, and his cigars, operated marvellously in his favour with the gentlemen; every one sought his society, and called him a good fellow. The weather had hitherto been too fine for sea-sickness, and his agreeable attentions, his vivacity and elegant compliments, rendered him not less a favourite with the ladies. Isabella alone despised him; while he, affecting to despise her in return, circulated foul whispers against her character. Whatever doubts there might be in the minds of his auditory respecting the veracity of his accusation, the breath of slander is exhaled from a poison so black, that for a time its passing shadow will veil the holiness of a saint and bedim the radiance of a seraph. Isabella, therefore, was shunned by her own sex as contagious, and by the other treated with cold indifference. Occasionally she observed their scrutinizing glances, or coloured at their half audible whispers, but, in the purity of her own heart, she suspected not the cause. In the master of the vessel only she still found a friend, who, although rough as his own element, evinced towards her the tenderness of a parent.

For some days the wind was adverse, and, on the Sabbath morning, being the fifth from their leaving Newcastle, it was a dead calm. The skipper was walking backward and forward upon the deck, now glancing at the clouds, and now at the shore, with the countenance of a man who considers he has reason neither to be satisfied with himself nor with others. In the cabin some appeared to read, others yawned, while some went to the deck and instantly returned. The ladies looked at each other, whispered, fretted, and exclaimed—"How tedious!" Isabella sat silent amidst the unhappy group, "among them, but not of them."

Mr Stafford, who hitherto had been whistling at his toilette, turned round and exclaimed—"Dumb as the foundations of a Quaker's chapel! Come," continued he, placing a couple of bottles of claret upon the table, "my pantomimic company of tragedians, allow me to administer the comforts of a calm to the necessities of your poor dumb mouths;" and, as he poured out the wine, he sang a few lines of an idle song. The company looked upon each other with a flitting expression of horror—none of them had been accustomed to hear the Sabbath so desecrated, though, as he proceeded, a few of them relaxed into a smile. But Isabella, rising, said emphatically—"Sir, the FOOL hath said in his heart, there is no God!" And she pronounced the word, *fool*, with a pointed sarcasm, which, although it in some measure took from the spirit of the original, rendered it more poignant in its present application.

"Your ladyship!" replied he, sneeringly, and bowing to her with an air of mock humility. "Lily of the saints!" he added, "preach on, that the humblest of thy slaves may treasure up in his heart of hearts the pious honey of thine wn sweet lips!"

He paused, and continuing his attitude of mock humility, commenced to hum the tune which he before had attempted to sing.

"Sir," said Isabella, glancing upon him with scorn and compassion, "I pity you."

"Now for a sermon!" he added, but the words faltered on his tongue, and he sat down in confusion.

"Sermon or no sermon," said the skipper, entering from the foot of the cabin stairs, where he had descended to stop the singing himself, "I'll neither allow Sabbath-breaking, nor any wickedness that I can prevent, on board a ship o' mine"

"Come, old prig," returned Stafford, "I've paid for my passage, I suppose, and I'll have you to know that I'll amuse myself as I please. Don't think, my good fellow, that because I have listened to a little sermonizing from a pretty face, that I am to be bored with your croaking." And he began to whistle a waltz.

"Poor thing!" resumed the skipper, "ye are to be pitied, after a'. I'll declare, when I see bits o' dandy creatures like you glorying in your wickedness, and doubling your nieves in the face o' Heaven, it puts me in mind o' a peacock spreading its tail to stop a whirlwind, or a cockle opening its shell to swallow a waterspout!"

At this moment the breeze sprang up, and the mate summoning all hands to deck, Mr Stafford was left unheeded to reflect on his own folly. During the night the wind blew very fresh; and the vessel, having left the land and entered Boston Deeps, laboured considerably. From the ladies' cabin issued prayers, shrieks, and groans of suffering, and every one devoutly wished to be once more blest with the tediousness of a calm; and, as the vessel yawed, rocked, and staggered with the heavy swell, and the ponderous boom, with its mainsail flapping like thunder, grating, crashing, clanking, and tearing with sudden jerk, or with fearful lunge reversing the laws of gravity, and tearing both mast and vessel into the sea, scream rose upon scream; sickness and terror met in conflict. Babel seemed above them and thunder below. The wind bellowed more madly. The plunges of the vessel became more frequent and more alarming. There was a running to and fro upon the deck—a bawling and a bustle. Darkness hung over them—thick, substantial darkness, rendering the very surge invisible. The heavy clouds seemed embracing the waters, and the crushed winds roared between the pressure of their meeting. A storm, by almost imperceptible degrees, had circled round them. Every sail of the vessel was reefed, and both anchors dropped; but the chain cable snapped like the web of a gossamer, and she lunged and tugged from her remaining anchor, dragging it after her, like a fiery horse tearing from the rein of a schoolboy. The mast bent as a proud man bends in the day of adversity; the topmast went overboard, striking heavily upon the deck as it fell. It struck immediately over the bed of the Honourable Edward Stafford. A loud shriek issued from the curtained railings; they were flung open, and out sprank Mr Stafford, dragging after him the bed-clothes, wringing his hands, and crying to Heaven for mercy. The dressed and the half-dressed now stood around the floor, clinging to each other and the furniture of the cabin for safety—each speaking and no one hearing;—but a clamour, loud, confused, and fearful, mingled with the noise of the winds and waves. Isabella alone remained tranquil. The vessel had dragged her anchor for several miles; they were in the midst of breakers, and the increased confusion upon deck announced the horrors of a lee shore, when she suddenly brought to, and half turning to the weather, a heavy sea broke over her, sweeping from the deck the boat, casks, and spars, and gushing down the cabin stairs, encompassed its terror-stricken inmates to the knees. The heart of Mr Stafford sprang to his throat, and his feet to the table, where he remained upon his knees, wringing his hands by the side of a flickering lamp. While he was in this position, the vessel was suddenly driven upon her side; for, through the darkness of the night, another vessel had run against her, and, she being cracked with age, the bowsprit of the other went through planks and timbers, and, before it gave way, projected rudely several feet into the cabin, forming an unexpected and unwelcome intruder upon the motley scene of sickness and despair. Fear had already fastened the gurgling gasp in the throats of many of the passengers, when a voice from the deck exclaimed—"Ladies and gentlemen, look to yourselves!" It was the signal of death. A general groan followed. There was a rush to

the cabin stairs. Calm as Isabella had hitherto been, she was now changed. It is difficult to look the grim angel in the face with indifference; but she rushed not to the stairs with the others. Mr Stafford was driven from the table by the uncourteous visit of the bowsprit, and now wallowed upon the floor, buffeting with the brine, imagining himself at the bottom of the vasty deep. The concussion of the vessels had brought his head in violent conjunction with the cabin floor, which, with his excited fears, deprived him of the consciousness of time and place; and being immersed in water, he continued to gasp, groan, shriek, and flounder upon the floor, seizing the heels of his fellow-passengers—who in their eagerness for escape, had wedged up the cabin door—doubting nothing, as they trode upon his delicate fingers, that he had thrust them into the mouth of a ravenous fish, which had come to feast upon his unfortunate body.

"Save me!—save me!" he cried again and again, as he continued tossing and rolling in the water.

The vessel again righted, and he was swept to the feet of Isabella, who, aroused by his cries of terror, raised him to his feet. He struggled, gasped, trembled. His eyes and mouth opened to their utmost width—he appeared to draw the breath of an hour in a moment; and, gazing round vacantly, he seemed to marvel whether he was in the world of men, of fish, or of spirits.

"You are living, brave Sir!" said Isabella, sarcastically, smiling at his excess of terror; "but," added she, leaving him, "the Sabbath-breaker and the scoffer are not the most courageous in the hour of danger."

It is only necessary to add that the vessels, having got disentangled, with daybreak the storm abated; and, on the ninth day after leaving Newcastle, the vessel drew up off the Hermitage Stairs, Wapping, with the loss of topmost, anchor, and cables, beef and water casks, spars, oars, and other minor *et ceteras*, together with damaged bulwarks and hulk; but with the crew and passengers safe.

Isabella had not had an opportunity of writing to her husband, to acquaint him with the name of the vessel in which she would take her passage, nor when she would leave Newcastle; and, as they drew up in the tier, while the friends and relatives of other passengers thronged around them, to her no hand was extended. She stood as one deserted, upon the threshold of the Nineveh of nations; and the crowds that passed before her seemed as the ghosts of solitude, giving tongues to bereavement and forms to desolation. She felt herself alone in the midst of millions, solitary as a wearied bird whose wing has drooped in the wilderness.

She went on shore, where she was immediately accosted by a hackney-coachman, whom she requested to convey her to a Mr Fulton's in Cornhill, to whose care her husband had requested her to forward the letters she addressed to him. She was informed by the skipper that Cornhill was not above a mile and a half from the wharf; and, as the coach drove on, passing the bustling crowds who hurried along the streets, she forgot for a moment her own feelings in contemplation of the motley scene. The coach stopped facing the Mint, and the driver, leaving his box, spoke a few words with another coachman, who immediately drove rapidly in the direction of Watling Street. After a few minutes' delay, the coachman again mounted the box. She had never before looked upon a countenance where a grovelling and villanous soul had written in such broad and unblushing characters its own worthlessness. It was one of those countenances which it is hardly possible to pass upon the street without disliking. In it were pourtrayed meanness, servility, depravity, and deceit—it was purple with dissipation, and blotched with iniquity. She shuddered to find herself, though in the broad day, and in the midst of the metropolis, under the care of such a man. She began to feel conscious that they must have proceeded much farther than the distance mentioned by the skipper, and, with a degree of alarm, she inquired at the driver if he rightly understood where she wished to be set down.

"Vy, yes," replied he, "I knows the house well enough: it is Mr Fulton's of Cornhill, an't it?"

"Yes," she answered; and he added that they would be there within five minutes, and drove on. Within the time he specified, they stopped before an elegant house in a square, the silence of which was only broken by the rattling of a few fashionable carriages. The coachman alighted, and a liveried servant stood ready to receive her. She inquired if the house to which she had been conducted was Mr Fulton's of Cornhill, and the servant answered that it was. She, however, had been within it but a few minutes, when she became conscious that she was under the roof and in the power of the Honourable Edward Stafford. Despair gave her strength; she raised her eyes to Heaven, and in the emphatic words of Judith, prayed—"Strengthen my hand!" Grasping a fruit-knife, which lay near her, in her hand, she made a desperate effort to escape; and, although the servants aided their master in opposing her, yet, as my readers have already had a specimen of his courage, and as the heroism of his domestics was not of that description which "smiles at the drawn dagger and defies its point," they will not be surprised to learn that through half-a-dozen such assailants one weak woman, rendered desperate, forced her escape.

Having reached Cornhill, she was from thence conducted, by one of Mr Fulton's clerks, to Red Lion Square, where her husband then lodged. Their meeting was one of sorrow and of joy; but I need not describe it. Alexander perceived that she was agitated, and he intreated to know the cause. She, fearful of the consequences that might arise from divulging it, would have concealed it; but it is difficult for an affectionate wife to conceal from her husband aught that concerns him; and within half an hour he knew all that had passed during her passage to London and since she arrived. He would have rushed forth on the instant to seek revenge, but she clung around his neck, she entreated him not to leave her, and he consented to defer the punishment of Stafford to a more favourable moment.

From week to week, Alexander's expected appointment under government was delayed; and, although they had parted with almost every article of any value which they had brought with them, they began to be in want. Yet Isabella murmured not, but sought to sooth her husband and raise his drooping spirits. At length, the long wished for day on which he was to be installed into office arrived, and ten o'clock was the hour fixed by his patron for meeting him. Everything around him wore a face of joy. He now knew that wealth was unnecessary to secure happiness with one who had taught him that contentment is true riches. He longed for the appointed hour. There was a tear in Isabella's eye, but it was a tear of gratitude and happiness.

"Bless thee—my own!" she said, as he rose to depart; and in silence he kissed her cheek.

Never until now had she felt the full measure of her anxiety for the issue of an event to which her husband looked forward with passionate eagerness. Slowly and tediously the morning passed away; noon came, and the hours seemed lengthening; and evening drew on, but it brought not Alexander. The long summer day died in midnight, but no remembered footstep stopped at the threshold. The morning dawn stole upon the voiceless streets, imperceptibly filling them with the slow and silent light.

"It is another day!" she exclaimed, in agony; "and where is my Alexander?"

Precisely at the appointed hour, Alexander had arrived at the house of his patron. The servant who opened the door, muttered that it was too early—that his master was not down—and requested him to remain a few minutes in an

apartment adjoining the lobby. The few minutes became an hour. Alexander was mortified and in agony. The clock, measuring out the moments, seemed to remind him of the insults to which he was subjected. At length he heard the "great man's" foot upon the stair, and rose to meet him. But the patron passed on, and his carriage drew up to the door. Alexander sprang forward, and, in the excitement of his feelings, placed his hand upon his shoulder. The bestower of patronage turned haughtily, and demanded the cause of the interruption. Alexander returned his glance with equal haughtiness, and demanded to know how he had dared first to mock and now insult him.

"Begone, fellow!" exclaimed the senator, contemptuously.

"Never!" replied Alexander, "until you have apologized for that word, and for having dared to mock me."

The courage of the silent member was rather of an aspen character, and he became pale and trembled. Struggling for dignity of manner, shaking, and calling up an air of offended importance, he said he should have felt pleasure to have served him, in consideration of the kindness of his family; but added, after considerable faltering and hesitation, that he was compelled to withdraw his countenance and patronage, owing to the representations which he had heard of his habits and character, and that, in consequence, the situation he intended for him was already bestowed upon another.

"Representations regarding MY habits and character, Sir?" exclaimed Alexander; "tell me who has dared to revile me."

"My informant is a gentleman of honour and of family, one who knows you well—and beyond this I will not be braved to inform you."

"You shall!" exclaimed Alexander.

"Never?" answered the other bitterly, and called to his servants to obtain assistance and give him into custody; and as he spoke he slid to the farther corner of the lobby. Alexander's eyes glared upon him as a wounded lion measures its victim. There was an unearthly earnestness and determination in his manner that might have appalled a stouter heart. He grasped the trembler firmly by the arm, and in a tone more impressive than anger, slowly and solemnly inquired—"What is the name of my defamer?"

"The Honourable Edward Stafford," stammered out the other, awed by the desperate resoluteness of his manner.

"Stafford?" exclaimed Alexander, starting back—"am I then a second time stung by a worm?—poisoned by a reptile?—Stafford!" he repeated, and hurried from the house.

He had turned aside into the Park, to conceal his agitation, indulging in the secret determination to proceed to Leicester Square and seek vengeance upon his enemy; but his gestures betrayed the agitation of his spirit, and excited the loud laughter of two horsemen who rode behind him. He turned fiercely round upon the mockers of his misery—one of them was the Honourable Edward Stafford. Alexander sprang upon him, and dragged him to the ground, as a tiger springeth upon its prey. In his fury he trampled him beneath his feet, and he lay bleeding and insensible upon the ground, when his companion, having procured the assistance of the police, Alexander was taken into custody, and, being brought before the magistrates, was committed for trial.

Wretched and disconsolate, Isabella beheld the sun of another day set, and yet she heard nothing of her husband. She had hurried from street to street, wild and restless as a household bird, which, escaped from its cage, breaks its wings and its heart, as it flutters, without aim and without rest, through the strange wilderness of liberty. Wearied with fatigue, and well nigh delirious with wretchedness, she was ready to inquire of every stranger that she met—"Have you seen my Alexander?" And again and again she returned to their silent and comfortless lodgings; but there the sound of her own sighs murmured desolation; and, in impatient agony, she exclaimed—"My husband!—my Alexander?—where shall I find him."

She had sent messengers in every direction, and to all of whom she had heard him mention but their name; and, in her agony, her tearful eyes had wandered over the broad Thames, fearfully and eagerly surveying its shores, and following its stream for miles, till, faint and weary, she sank despairing and exhausted on the ground. A letter from her husband was at length put into her hands, which informed her that he was then a prisoner in Newgate. She immediately hastened to the gloomy prison-house, and when she arrived before it, and beheld its ponderous gates, studded with bolts of iron, and overhung with the emblems of the felon's chain and the gibbet, she recoiled back for a few paces, and her heart failed.

Until the time of admission arrived, she wandered disconsolately in front of the prison, and, on being admitted, she heard the sound as of an unruly multitude issuing from the corner of the prison whither she was conducted. She was shewn into a large and noxious apartment, where about a hundred individuals of all ages, the accused and the condemned, were assembled together—some cooking, some practising the art of the pickpocket, and others holding mock courts of law. Her heart became motionless with horror as she gazed wildly round the den of guilt and pollution. On perceiving her, they desisted from their amusements and boisterous mirth, and gazed upon her in silent wonder. Their sudden and unusual silence aroused Alexander, who was sitting alone in a dark corner of the room; and, sorrowfully raising his head, he perceived every eye turned upon his own beautiful and afflicted wife. He sprang forward, and, forgetful of all around, she sank upon his bosom. He led her to a remote corner of the apartment, and pressing her hand to his breast—"Ah, my Isabella!" he whispered in agony, "this is indeed kind! to visit me in such a place, and in the midst of these miserable beings!"

"Say not kind, dear husband," she replied—"what is too much for the affection of a wife to do? Horrible as this place is, but yesterday to have known that you lived, and I could have been its inmate for life."

"Isabella," added he, "for imprisonment I care but little—from a tribunal of my countrymen I have nothing to fear; but there is one constant and heart-piercing misery which is consuming me. While I am here a prisoner, who will protect, who will provide for you, my love, for you?"

A faint smile trembled over her features as she replied—"HE who sheltereth the lamb from the storm! HE who provideth the ravens with food!"

"But," added he, "are not we already almost without money?—And, until I am free, until"——

"Come, love," said she tenderly, "do not afflict yourself with idle fears. The sparrow chirps not the less joyfully in the farm-yard because the last sheaf is given to the flail; but day after day finds the little flutterer happy and contented as when it nestled in profusion. You bade me come smiling, and you only are sad. Come, love—give me one smile—fear not for me; with my needle I may be enabled to provide for myself, and to assist you."

"Isabella!" he exclaimed, starting with agitation, and smiting his hand upon his brow.

"Nay, love," she added, "start not at shadows; when real deprivations are to be averted, yield not to those of pride and imagination. Adversity is a stern master, but it relaxes its brow before a cheerful pupil. Come," she added, "let us rather speak of what I can do for my prisoner."

She endeavoured to pronounce the last word playfully, but the attempt failed, and she turned aside her head to conceal a tear.

"Nay, sweetest," said he, affectionately drawing her hand from her face, "do not weep—I will not be unhappy—for the sake of my Isabella, I will not."

But the day of trial came; Alexander was placed before his judges and his faithful wife stood near his side. The

clerk of the court rose, and, holding the indictment, said, "Alexander Hamilton, you are charged with committing an unprovoked and outragious assault, with intent to murder, upon the person of the Honourable Edward Stafford, in Hyde Park. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty," said the prisoner, firmly.

The counsel for the prosecution then rose—"Gentlemen of the jury," said he, "I confess I am at a loss to find words to express the deadliness of purpose, and the desperate character of the assault with which the prisoner is charged. A deed more reckless, more atrocious and criminal in its character, never was attempted. Its aim was blood!—murder at noonday—in the Park, and in the midst of hundreds. After this, where is safety to be found? Were the prisoner to go unpunished, madmen might be set at large, and assassins crowd our streets with impunity. The ferocity of a savage of the woods, when fired by victory and inflamed with the war-whoop, is tame, compared with the brutal violence which was manifested by the prisoner. With a disregard of all personal consequences, his object was *murder!* I repeat the word—murder was his object; and he has failed in accomplishing it only through the prompt assistance of the medical gentleman to whose care my client was intrusted. I do not say this from a desire to influence you against the prisoner; but from a regard for truth, for our common safety, and the public welfare. I shall prove to you that this is not a solitary case of the prisoner's outrage; but that, on the same day on which he attempted the life of the prosecutor, he was guilty of a scarcely less daring assault upon an honourable member of the House of Commons—that on former occasions he has forced his way into the house of Mr Stafford, and endeavoured to extort money by violence. In short, the evidence is such as will leave no doubt upon your mind of the prisoner's guilt and desperate character, and assures me of what will be your verdict. What plea he will set up, I know not; but he who could attempt the life of a fellow-man in broad day, will not be nice as to the expedients to which he resorts. Should temporary insanity be urged, I need not tell you that you will consider whether it be lawful for a person subject to such fits of lunacy to be left to go at large amongst mankind; and that, if such a plea be offered, you will duly examine that it be established."

During this harangue, not a muscle of Alexander's face moved; but he stood with his eyes bent upon the speaker, manifesting throughout the same calm and proud look of conscious innocence. Isabella exhibited almost the same calmness as her husband; but at times the glow of indignation and impatience flushed her cheek, and she threw upon the accuser a glance of scorn.

I will not enter into the evidence. Several of the witnesses were gentlemen of rank, who, having been spectators of the assault in the Park, gave an unprejudiced statement of what they had seen, and their testimony tended to prepare the minds of the court to give credence to the evidence of less respectable witnesses; for they confirmed the desperate character of the attack and the injury received by the prosecutor. A herd of others were suborned to aggravate the charges, and to contravert whatever evidence the prisoner might bring forward. The case for the prosecution closed, and every hope of acquittal was destroyed. Still he maintained the same firmness; and, for a few seconds, not a sound was heard throughout the court. To the ear of Isabella, the breathless silence was as sudden thunder; hitherto, while listening to the accumulated perjuries with which her husband's ruin was sought, notwithstanding her hopelessness and agony, her eye had not wandered from him; but she now turned, with a wild and imploring look, towards the jury, at once to read on their countenances the impression which the evidence had made, and to conjure them in speechless agony to believe it not. But she, shuddering, turned away from the appalling scene, and a groan burst from her bosom. She beheld in their features the cold, fixed expression of men who knew no feeling but justice; and she saw their eyes turned to her husband, but in sternness rather than in compassion.

"Prisoner," said the judge, "you have heard the charges which have been preferred against you; if you have any witnesses on your behalf, let them be brought forward; or, if you have aught to say in your defence, why judgment ought not to be pronounced against you, speak now."

"My Lord," said Alexander, "I crave your indulgence. Trusting to innocence, I have employed no counsel, and I hoped to need none. If, therefore, in the few words which I shall speak, I depart from the rules and usages of this court, I beg your protection and direction. Gentlemen of the jury," he added, "much of the evidence which has this day been given before you has not impressed upon you a firmer conviction of my wickedness than it has filled me with horror at the baseness and the perjury of which men can be found capable."

"My Lord," interrupted the prosecutor's counsel, "such language is not to be borne."

"The prisoner has claimed my protection," said the judge, "and he shall have it. Proceed," added he, addressing Alexander; "but remember that unsubstantiated charges against others will only aggravate the proofs already given, and militate against you."

Alexander bowed, and continued—"Gentlemen, that you believe me the guilty being that I have been described, I cannot for a moment doubt; nor do I hope that I shall be able to shake that conviction, and prove to you between myself and the prosecutor, who is, indeed, the guilty party. I know well that words spoken by one situated as I now am come in a questionable form and produce but a slight impression, yet, as truth is stronger than falsehood, I would hope that what I do say may not be altogether ineffectual. That I did make an attack upon the prosecutor in the Park, is *true;* that my manner was as enraged as has been described, I admit; and that my language might be of a threatening character, I do not deny; but that my intentions were criminal, that I sought his life, is false."

He then stated the nature of his acquaintance with Stafford—his having forced his way into his house to request payment of a part of the debt which he owed him. But when he spoke of the indignities which he had offered to his wife, and of the calumnies he had whispered in the ear of him who was to procure him an appointment under government, his soul flashed truth from his eyes, every glance told a tale of scorn and wrongs. Stafford, who was present, quailed as the tide of his eloquent indignation rolled on; and could the astonished listeners have turned their eyes from the speaker to him of whom he spoke, they would have read guilt and confusion on his pale cheeks. Even the judge laid down his notes, and gazed upon the prisoner with a look of wonder. Isabella's fears passed away as she listened to the torrent of indignant eloquence which he poured forth; and, while she participated in the admiration of the crowd, she felt also the affection and the pride of a wife, and starting from a seat with which she had for some time been accommodated, she pressed closer to his side, her bosom heaving, her cheeks glowing, and her beaming eyes declaring that, where he then stood as a criminal, she was proud to call him husband.

"Could any man," he exclaimed, in conclusion, "bear more than I did and not resent it? Would any of you, gentlemen—yea, would his Lordship, under the same provocations, have acted otherwise than I did? If the attack was furious, was it not provoked? Or could human nature endure more and attempt less? If I am culpable, it is because I have the feelings of a man—because I am not more or because I am not less than man: and, if I am guilty, is my prosecutor innocent?"

The counsel for the prosecution again rose, and added—'Gentlemen of the jury, I presume it is now unnecessary for me to remind you that the prisoner having attempted murder on one of his Majesty's subjects, it is altogether unnecessary for him to perform it now upon his Majesty's English. If rhetorical froth were proof, and sound received as evidence, the case of the prisoner might be different from what it is. But it unfortunately happens for his oratory, that froth is not proof, and that noise is not evidence. I will not insult your good sense by adverting for a moment to his shallow calumnies and malicious assertions. You will place them to the spirit of hardened wickedness that invented them. But, gentlemen, we shall now see what evidence he has to bring forward in support of his oratory, and in substantiation of his malicious and frail subterfuges."

No witnesses being likely to appear in behalf of the prisoner, the governor of the gaol voluntarily came forward and bore testimony to the excellence of Alexander's conduct while under confinement, and also to the exemplary affection and modesty manifested by his wife.

He left the witness-box, and another pause ensued, when Isabella sprang forward, stretching out her arms towards the jury, and exclaimed—"Hear me! hear me!—only for a moment—as you are men—as you are fathers—as you are Christians, hear me! Do not tear my Alexander from me—he is innocent! Yes! yes! he is innocent of the guilt attributed towards him by the wicked man who seeks his life!—innocent as your babes that may smile at their mother's breast! Save, then, my husband, and Heaven will reward you! He is all that is dear to me—will you tear us asunder? If ye have hearts within you, you will not. Look on his countenance—is there guilt there? Look upon his prosecutor, upon his enemy who sits before you, and oh! can you find innocence where dissipation has left its furrows and hatred its shadows? If ye *will* do what may seem to you justice—remember to love mercy! Draw not upon your heads the misery or the blood of a human being, through the guilt of a false witness! Save, I implore you, save my husband, for he is innocent!"

The judge summed up the evidence; and more than once he paused and wiped away a tear that did not disgrace his office. "Go," he concluded, addressing the jury—"the prisoner is in your hands; and if there be a doubt upon your minds as to whether you should pronounce him guilty, give the prisoner the benefit of that doubt."

"Merciful Heaven!" exclaimed Isabella, "deliver my husband—make known his innocence to these men! She stretched her hand towards him, and cried aloud, "O my Alexander—in death—even in death, I will be yours! They shall not part us!"

And, as she wept, he bent over the dock and threw his arms upon her neck, exclaiming—"Loved one, weep not. The Avenger of the oppressed will not forsake us."

The jury were rising to withdraw, every eye was moistened with Isabella's distress—while all felt conscious of her husband's doom—when a humming noise arose amidst the spectators, and "Let the jury stop!—let the jury stop!" cried many voices from the door.

The skipper of the vessel in which Isabella had come to London pressed into the court; and, being sworn—

"Weel, Sirs," said he, "it isn't much that the like o' me has got to say; only, ye see, Mr Hamilton here, that ye ca' a prisoner, is an auld owner's son o' mine. I have known him since he was the height o' my knee, and he was always a guid and a cannie laddie; and I venture to say, had his father not been ower honest a man, and paid twenty shillings in the pound to every body, he wouldna hae been in his grave to-day. As for *the thing* that is carrying on the prosecution against Mr Hamilton, I knaw something o' him tae; and he may think himself weel off that it wasna a wife o' mine that he shewed his blackguardism to, for had I been my auld maister's son, hang me! after the insults I saw him offer to this bonny lady here, when they were both passengers on board o' my ship, Jemmy Johnson take me! if I wudna hae twisted his neck off his shoulders in a moment!"

The counsel for the prosecution had risen to ridicule the evidence of the prisoner, when he was interrupted by a negro servant of the Honourable Edward Stafford, who had been touched by the fiery eloquence of Alexander and the distress of his wife, and who rose and exclaimed, while others attempted to keep him down—"Me will speak!—Massa be de grand villain! Me be black, but you wont make me one black heart. De prisoner be innocent! Massa do owe him von hundred pound, for me carried it to massa, and massa did try to steal de wife ob Massa Hamilton; which be bad—bery bad? Prisoner be de injured man, like de poor African?"

This involuntary testimony on the part of the negro arrested the attention of both judge and jury, and they were requesting that he should be placed in the witness-box, when two gentlemen hurriedly entered the court, and pressed forward, requesting to be heard. The one stated himself to be a Mr Fulton, a broker in Cornhill. With him Alexander's father had long had extensive dealings. He has already been mentioned in the course of this narrative. Alexander had requested that his wife should address her letters to him to his counting-house. But he was abroad when Alexander reached London, and he only arrived on the evening before his trial. He knew the services which his friend, the elder Hamilton, and his son also, had conferred upon the member of parliament of whom we have spoken, and calling upon him, and hearing the accusations that were preferred against Alexander by Stafford, he demanded that they should be probed to the bottom. They did investigate into them, and they discovered them to be wholly false and without foundation. And the patron now came forward to express his contrition for the act of injustice into which he had been betrayed, and to bear his testimony against the character and malignity of the prosecutor. A change came over the countenances of the jury. The judge seemed perplexed, and was rising to sum up the evidence, when they rose as one man, and exclaimed—"*Not guilty.*"

"Not guilty, my Lord," repeated the foreman of the jury; "but it would give us pleasure to see the accuser stand where the accused has this day stood."

The spectators burst into a shout, and the Honourable Edward Stafford endeavoured to escape from the court. All that is necessary to add is, that Alexander Hamilton became the clerk of Mr Fulton, in a few years his partner, and eventually his successor, and his latter days were more prosperous than any that his father had known, while the worth of his wife and her affection increased with age. One word respecting the Honourable Edward Stafford, and I have done. In a few years he became a titled beggar, and twenty years afterwards, when Alexander Hamilton, with his wife and family came to reside in Northumberland, where they had been born and brought up, they heard of a poor gentle man at an inn in the next village, who seemed to be in great distress. They went to visit him—it was the Honourable Edward Stafford. He wept as he recognised them. In the words of holy writ—they heaped coals of fire upon his head—and with his hand in Alexander's he breathed his last—and at their own expense they buried him with his fathers Such are a few Leaves from the Life of Alexander Hamilton

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE WIFE OR THE WUDDY.

There was a criminal in a cart
  Agoing to be hanged—
Reprieve to him was granted;
  The crowd and cart did stand,
To see if he would marry a wife,
  Or, otherwise, choose to die!
"Oh, why should I torment my life?"
  The victim did reply;
"The bargain's bad in every part—
But a wife's the worst!—drive on the cart."

HONEST Sir John Falstaff talketh of "minions of the moon;" and, truth to tell, two or three hundred years ago, nowhere was such an order of knighthood more prevalent than upon the Borders. Not only did the Scottish and English Borderers make their forays across the Tweed and the ideal line, but rival chieftains, though of the same nation, considered themselves at liberty to make inroads upon the property of each other. The laws of *meum* and *tuum* they were unable to comprehend. Theirs was the strong man's world, and with them *might* was *right*. But to proceed with our story. About the beginning of the seventeenth century, one of the boldest knights upon the Borders was William Scott, the young laird of Harden. His favourite residence was Oakwood Tower, a place of great strength, situated on the banks of the Ettrick. The motto of his family was "*Reparabit cornua Phœbe,*" which being interpreted by his countrymen, in their vernacular idiom, ran thus—"We'll hae moonlight again." Now, the young laird was one who considered it his chief honour to give effect to both the spirit and the letter of his family motto. Permitting us again to refer to honest Falstaff, it implied that they were "gentlemen of the night;" and he was not one who would loll upon his pillow when his "avocation" called him to the foray.

It was drawing towards midnight, in the month of October, when the leaves in the forest had become brown and yellow, and with a hard sound rustled upon each other, that young Scott called together his retainers, and addressing them, said—"Look ye, friends, is it not a crying sin and a national shame to see things going aglee as they are doing? There seems hardly such a thing as manhood left upon the Borders. A bit scratch with a pen upon parchment is becoming of more effect than a stroke with the sword. A bairn now stands as good a chance to hold and to have, as an armed man that has a hand to take and to defend. Such a state o' things was only made for those who are owre lazy to ride by night, and owre cowardly to fight. Never shall it be said that I, William Scott, of Harden, was one who either submitted or conformed to it. Give me the good, old, manly law, that 'they shall keep who can,' and wi' my honest sword will I maintain my right against every enemy. Now, there is our natural and lawful adversary, auld Sir Gideon Murray o' Elibank, carries his head as high as though he were first cousin to a king, or the sole lord o' Ettrick Forest. More than once has he slighted me in a way which it wasna for a Scott to bear; and weel do I ken that he has the will, and wants but the power, to harry us o' house an' ha'. But, by my troth, he shall pay a dear reckoning for a' the insults he has offered to the Scotts o' Harden. Now, every Murray among them has a weel-stocked mailing, and their kine are weel-favoured; to-night the moon is laughing cannily through the clouds:—therefore, what say ye, neighbours—will ye ride wi' me to Elibank? and, before morning, every man o' them shall have a toom byre."

"Hurra!" shouted they, "for the young laird! He is a true Scott from head to heel! Ride on, and we will follow ye! Hurra!—the moon glents owre the hill, to guide us to the spoils o' Elibank! To-night we shall bring langsyne back again."

There were twenty of them, stout and bold men, mounted upon light and active horses—some armed with firelocks, and others with Jeddart staffs; while, in addition to such weapons, every man had a good sword by his side. At their head was the fearless young laird; and, at a brisk pace, they set off towards Elibank. Mothers and maidens ran to their cottage doors, and looked after them with foreboding hearts when they rode along; for it was a saying amongst them, that, "when young Willie Scott o' Harden set his foot in the stirrup at night, there were to be swords drawn before morning." They knew, also, the feud between him and the house of Elibank, and as well did they know that the Murrays were a resolute and a sturdy race.

Morn had not dawned when they arrived at the scene where their booty lay. Not a Murray was abroad; and to the extreme they carried the threat of the young laird into execution, of making "toom byres." By scores and by hundreds, they collected together, into one immense herd, horned cattle and sheep, and they drove them before them through the Forest towards Oakwood Tower. The laird, in order to repel any rescue that might be attempted, brought up the rear, and, in the joy of his heart, he sang, and, at times, cried aloud, "There will be dry breakfasts in Elibank before the sun gets oot, but a merry meal at Oakwood afore he gangs doun. An entire bullock shall be roasted, and wives and bairns shall eat o' it."

"I humbly beg your pardon, Maister William," said an old retainer, named Simon Scott, and who traced a distant relationship to the family; "I respectfully ask your pardon; but I have been in your faither's family for forty years, and never was backward in the hoor o' danger, or in a ploy like this; but ye will just alloo me to observe, sir, that wilfu' waste maks wofu' want, and I see nae occasion whatever for roasting a bullock. It would be as bad as oor neebors on the ither side o' the Tweed, wha are roast, roastin or bakin in the oven, every day o' the week, and makin

stane weight o' meat no gang sae far as twa or three pounds wud hae dune. Therefore, sir, if ye will tak my advice, if we are to hae a feast, there will be nae roasting in the way. There was a fine sharp frost the other nicht, and I observed the rime lying upon the kail; so that baith greens and savoys will be as tender as a weel-boiled three-month-auld chicken; and I say, therefore, let the beef be boiled, and let them hae ladle-fu's o' kail, and ye will find, sir, that, instead o' a hail bullock, even if ye intend to feast auld and young, male and female, upon the lands o' Oakwood, a quarter o' a bullock will be amply sufficient, and the rest can be sauted doun for winter's provisions. Ye ken, sir, that the Murrays winna let us lichtly slip for this nicht's wark; and it is aye safest, as the saying is, to lay by for a sair fit."

"Well argued, good Simon," said the young laird; "but your economy is ill-timed. After a night's work, such as this, there is surely some licence for gilravishing. I say it—and who dare contradict me?—to-night, there is not one belonging to the house of Harden, be they old or young, who shall not eat of roast meat, and drink of the best."

"Weel, sir," replied Simon, "wi' reverence be it spoken, but I would beg to say that ye are wrang. Folk that ance get a liking for dainties tak ill wi' plainer fare again; and, moreover, sir, in a' my experience, I never kenned dainty bits and hardihood to go hand in hand; but, on the contrary, luxuries mak men effeminate, and discontented into the bargain."

The altercation between the old retainer and his young master ran farther; but it was suddenly interrupted by the deep-mouthed baying of a sleuth-hound; and its threatening howls were followed by a loud cry, as if from fifty voices, of—"To-night, for Sir Gideon and the house of Elibank!"

But here we pause to say that Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank was a man whose name was a sound of terror to all who were his enemies. As a foe, he was fierce, resolute, unforgiving. He had never been known to turn his back upon a foe, or forgive an injury. He knew the meaning of justice in its severest sense, but not of compassion; he was a stranger to the attribute of mercy, and the life of the man who had injured him, he regarded as little as the life of the worm which he might tread beneath his heel upon his path. He was a man of middle age; and had three daughters, none of whom were what the world calls beautiful; but, on the contrary, they were what even the dependants upon his estates described as "very ordinary-looking young women."

Such was Sir Gideon Murray of Elibank; and, although the young laird of Harden conceived that he had come upon him as "a thief in the night"—and some of my readers, from the transaction recorded, may be somewhat apt to take the scriptural quotation in a literal sense—yet I would say, as old Satchel sings of the Borderers of those days, they were men—

> "Somewhat unruly, and very ill to tame.
> I would have none think that I call them thieves;
> For, if I did, it would be arrant lies."

But, stealthily as the young Master of Harden had made his preparations for the foray, old Sir Gideon had got timely notice of it; and hence it was that not a Murray seemed astir when they took the cattle from the byres, and drove them towards Oakwood. But, through the moonlight, there were eyes beheld every step they took—their every movement was watched and traced; and, amongst those who watched, was the stern old knight, with fifty followers at his back.

"Quiet! quiet!" he again and again, in deep murmurs, uttered to his dependants, throwing back his hand, and, speaking in a deep and earnest whisper, that awed even the slow but ferocious sleuth-hound that accompanied them, and caused it to crouch back to his feet. In a yet deeper whisper, he added, encouragingly—"Patience, my merry men!—bide your time—ye shall hae work before long gc by."

When, therefore the young laird and his followers began to disperse in the thickest of the forest, as they drove the cattle before them, Sir Gideon suddenly exclaimed—"Now for the onset!" And, at the sound of his voice, the sleuth-hound howled loud and savagely.

"We are followed!—halt! halt!—to arms! to arms!" cried the heir of Harden.

Three or four were left in charge of the now somewhat scattered herd of cattle, and to drive them to a distance; while the rest of the party spurred back their horses as rapidly as the tangled pass in the forest would permit, to the spot from whence the voice of their young leader proceeded. They arrived speedily, but they arrived too late. In a moment, and with no signal save the baying of the hound, old Sir Gideon and his armed company had burst upon young Scott and old Simon, and ere the former could cry for assistance, they had surrounded them.

"Willie Scott! ye rash laddie!" cried Sir Gideon—"yield quietly, or a thief's death shall ye die; and in the very forest through which ye have this night driven my cattle, the corbies and you shall become acquaint—or, at least, if ye see not them, they shall see you and feel you too."

"Brag on, ye auld greybeard," exclaimed the youth; "but while a Scott o' Harden has a finger to wag, no power on earth shall make his tongue say, 'I am conquered!' So come on!—do your best—do your worst—here is the hand and the sword to meet ye!—and were ye ten to one, ye shall find that Willie Scott isna the lad to turn his back, though ten full-grown Murrays stand before his face."

"By my sooth, then, callant," cried the old knight, "and it was small mercy, after what ye hae done, that I intended to show ye; and after what ye hae said, it shall be less that I will grant ye! Sae come on lads and now to humble the Hardens!"

"Arm! every Scott to arms!" again shouted the young laird; "and now, Sir Gideon, if ye will measure weapons, and leave your *weel-faured* daughters as a legacy to the world, be it sae! But there are lads among your clan o' whom they would hae been glad, and who, belike in *pity*, might hae offered them their hands, but who will this night mak a bride o' the green sward! Sae come on, Sir Gideon, and on you and yours be the consequence!"

"Before sunrise," returned Sir Gideon, "and the winsome laird o' Harden shall boast less vauntingly, and rue that he had broke his jeers upon an auld man. Touch me, sir, but not my bairns."

The conflict began, and on each side the strife was bloody and desperate. Bold men grasped each other by the throat and they held their swords to each other's breasts, scowling one upon another with the ferocity of contending tigers, ere each gave the deadly plunge which was to hurl both into eternity. The report of fire-arms, the clash of swords, the clang of shields, with the neighing of maddened horses, the lowing of affrighted cattle, the howl of the sleuth-hounds, and the angry voices of fierce men, mingled wildly together, and, in one fearful and discordant echo, rang through the forest. This wild sound wss followed by the low melancholy groans of the dying. But, as I have already stated, the Scotts, and the cattle which they drove before them, were scattered, and ere those who were in advance could arrive to the rescue of their friends in the rear, the latter were slain, wounded, or overpowered. They also fought against fearful odds. The young laird himself had his sword broken in his grasp, and his horse was struck dead beneath him. He was instantly surrounded and made prisoner by the Murrays; and, at the same time, old Simon also fell into their hands

The few remaining retainers of the house of Harden gave way when they found their leader a captive, and they fled, leaving the cattle behind them. Sir Gideon Murray, therefore, recovered all that had been taken from him; and though he had captured but two prisoners, the one was the chief, and the other his principal adviser and second in command. The old knight, therefore, commanded that they should be bound with cords together, and in such rueful plight led to his castle at Elibank. It was noon before they reached it, and Lady Murray came forth to welcome her husband, and congratulate him upon his success. But, when she beheld the heir of Harden a captive, and thought of how little mercy was to be expected from Sir Gideon when once aroused, she remembered that she was a mother, and that one of her children might one day be situated as their prisoner then was.

The young laird, with his aged kinsman and dependant, were thrust into a dark room; and he who locked them up informed them that the next day their bodies would be hung up on the nearest tree.

"My life and lang fasting!" exclaimed Simon, "ye surely wouldna be speaking o' sic a thing as hanging to an auld man like me. If we were to be shot or beheaded—though I would like neither the ane nor the ither—it wouldna be a thing in particular to be complained o'; but to be hanged like a dog, is so disgracefu' and unchristian-like, that I would rather dee ten times in a day, than feel a hempen cravat about my neck ance. And, moreover, I must say that hanging is not treating my dear young maister and kinsman as he ocht to be treated. His birth, his rank, and the memory o' his ancestors and mine demand mair respect, and therefore I say, gae tell your maister, that, if he is determined that we are to die—though I have no ambition to cut my breath before my time—that I think, as a gentleman, it is his duty to see that we die the death o' gentlemen!"

"Silence, Simon," cried the young laird; "let Murray hang us in his bed-chamber if he will. No matter what manner o' death we die, provided only that we die like men. Let him hang us if he dare, and the disgrace be his, that is coward enough so to make an end of an enemy."

"O sir," said Simon, "but that is poor comfort to a man that has to leave a small family behind him."

"Simon! are you afraid to die?" cried the captive laird, in a tone of rebuke.

"No, your honour," said Simon—"that is, I am no more afraid to die than other men are, or ought to be—but only ye'll observe, sir, that I have no ambition—not, as I may say, to draw my last breath upon a wuddy, but to have it very unnaturally stopped. Begging your pardon, but you are a young man, while I have a wife and family that would be left to mourn for me!—and O sir! the wife and the bits o' bairns press unco sairly upon a man's heart, when death tries to come in the way between him and them. In exploits like that in which we were last nicht engaged, and also in battles abroad, I have faced danger in every shape a hundred times—yet, sir, to be shot in a moment as it were, or to be run through the body, and to die honourably on the field, is a very different thing from deliberately walking up a ladder to the branch o' a tree, from which ye are never to come doun in life again. And mair than that, if we had been o' Johnny Faa's gang, they couldna hae treated us mair disrespectfully, than to condemn us to the death that they have decreed for us."

"Providing ye die bravely, Simon," said the young laird, "it is little matter what manner o' death ye die; and as for your wife and weans, fear not, for my faither's house will provide for them. For, though I fall now, there will be other heirs left to the estate o' Harden."

While the prisoners thus conversed in the place of their confinement, Lady Murray spoke unto her husband, saying—"And what, Sir Gideon, if it be a fair question, may ye intend to do wi' the braw young laird o Harden, now that he is in your power?"

He drew her gently by the arm towards the window, and pointing towards a tree which grew at the distance of a few yards, he said—"Do ye see yonder branch o' the elm tree that is waving in the wind?—To-morrow, young Scott and his kinsman shall swing there together, or hereafter say that I am no Murray."

"O guidman!" said she, "it is because I was terrified that ye would be doing the like o' that, that caused me to ask the question. Now, I must say, Sir Gideon, whatever ye may think, that ye are not only acting cruelly but foolishly."

"I care naething about the cruelty," cried he; "what mercy did ever a Scott among them shew to me or to mine? Lady Murray, the ball is at my foot, and I will kick it, though I deprive Scott o' Harden o' a head. And what mean ye, dame, by saying I act foolishly?"

"Only this, guidman," said she—"that ye hae three daughters to marry, whom the world doesna consider to be owre weel-faured, and it isna every day that ye hae a husband for ane o' them in your hand."

"Sooth!" cried he, "and for once in your life ye are right, guidwife—there is mair wisdom in that remark than I would hae gien ye credit for. To-morrow, the birkie o' Harden shall have his choice—either upon the instant to marry our daughter, Meikle-mouthed Meg, or strap for it."

"Weel, Sir Gideon," added she, "to make him marry Meg will be mair purpose-like than to cut off the head and the hope of an auld house, in the very flower o' his youth; and there is nae doubt as to the choice he will mak, for there is an unco difference between them."

"Dinna be owre sure," continued the knight; "there is nae saying what his choice may be. There is both pluck and a spirit o' contradiction in the callant, and I wouldna be in the least surprised if he preferred the wuddy. I ken, had I been in his place, what my choice would hae been."

"I daresay, Sir Gideon," replied the old lady, who was jocose at the idea of seeing one of her daughters wed, "I daresay I could guess what that choice would hae been."

"And what, in your wisdom," said he sharply, "do ye think it would hae been—the wife or the wuddy?"

"O Gideon! Gideon!" said she, good-humouredly, and shaking her head, "weel do ye ken that your choice would hae been a wife."

"There ye are wrang," cried he; "I would rather die a death that was before me, than marry a wife I had never seen. But go ye and prepare Meg for becoming a bride the morn, and I shall see what the intended bridegroom says to the proposal."

In obedience to his commands, she went to an apartment in which their eldest daughter Agnes, but commonly called "Meikle-mouthed Meg," then sat, twirling a distaff. The old dame sat down by her daughter's side, and, after a few observations respecting the weather, and the quality of the lint they were then torturing into threads, she said—"Weel, I'm just thinking, Meggie, that ye mak me an auld woman. Ye would be six and twenty past at last Lammas."

"So I believe, mother!" said Meggie; and a sigh, or a very deep and long-drawn breath, followed her words.

"Dear me!" continued the old lady, "young men maun be growing very scarce. I wanted four months and five days o' being nineteen when I married your faither, and I had refused at least six offers before I took him."

"Ay, mother," replied the maiden; "but ye had a weel-faured face—there lay the difference! Heigho!"

"Heigho!" responded her mother, as in pleasant raillery—"what is the lassie heighoing at? Certes, if ye get a guidman before ye be six and twenty, ye may think yoursel' a very fortunate woman."

"Yes" added the maiden; "but I see sma' prospect o'

that. I douot ye will see the Ettrick running through the 'dowie dells o' Yarrow,' before ye hear tell o' an offer being made to me."

"Hoot, hoot!—dinna say sae, bairn,' added her mother; "there is nae saying what may betide ye yet. Ye think ye winna be married before ye are six and twenty; but, truly, my dear, there has mony a mair unlikely ship come to land. Now, what wud ye think o' the young laird o' Harden?"

"Mother! mother!" said Agnes, "wherefore do ye mock me? I never saw ye do that before. My faither has ta'en William Scott a prisoner; and, from what I hae heard, he will hang him in the morning. Ye ken what a man my faither is—when he says a thing he will do it; and how can you jest about the young man, when his very existence is reduced to a matter o' minutes and moments. Though, rather than my faither should tak his life, if I could save him, he should take mine."

"Weel said, my bairn," replied the old woman; "but dinna ye be put about concerning what will never come to pass. I doubtna that, before morning, ye will find young Scott o' Harden at your feet, and begging o' you to save his life, by giving him your hand and troth, and becoming his wife: and then, ye ken, your faither couldna, for shame, hang or do ony harm to his ain son-in-law."

"O mother! mother!" replied Agnes, "it will never be in my power to save him; for what ye hae said he will never think o'; and even if I were his wife, I question if my faither would pardon him, though I should beg it upon my knees."

"Oh, your faither's no sae ill as that, Meggie, my doo," said the old lady. "Mark my words—if Willie Scott consent to marry you, ye will henceforth find him and your faither hand and glove."

While this conversation between Lady Murray and her daughter took place, Sir Gideon entered the room where his prisoners were confined, and, addressing the young laird, said—"Now, ye rank marauder, though death is the very least that ye deserve or can expect from my hands, yet I will gie ye a chance for your life, and ye shall choose between a wife and the wuddy. To-morrow morning, ye shall either marry my daughter, Meg, or swing from the branch o' the nearest tree, and the bauldest Scott upon the Borders shanna tak ye down, until ye drop away, bone by bone, a fleshless skeleton."

"Good save us! most honourable and good Sir Gideon!" suddenly interrupted Simon, in a tone which bespoke his horror; "but ye certainly dinna intend to make an anatomy o' me too; or surely, when my honoured maister marries Miss Murray, (as I hope and trust he will,) ye will alloo me to dance at their wedding, instead o' dancing in the air, and keeping time to the music o' the soughing wind. And, O maister! for my sake, for your ain sake, and especially out o regard to my sma' and helpless family, consent to marry the lassie, though she isna extraordinar' weel-faured; for I am sure that, rather than die a dog's death, swinging from a tree, I would marry twenty wives, though they were a' as auld as the hills, as ugly as a starless midnicht, and had tongues like trumpets."

"Peace, Simon!" cried the young laird, impatiently; 'if ye hae turned coward, keep the sound o' yer fears within yer ain teeth. And ye, Sir Gideon," added he, turning towards the old knight, "in your amazing mercy and generosity, would spare my life, upon condition that I should marry your *bonny* daughter, Meg. Look ye, sir—I am Scott o' Harden, and ye are Murray o' Elibank; there is no love lost between us; chance has placed my life in your hands—take it, for I wouldna marry your daughter though ye should gie me life, and a' the lands o' Elibank into the bargain. I fear as little to meet death as I do to throw in your teeth that, had ye fallen into my hands, I would have hung ye wi' as little ceremony as I would bring a whip across the back o' a disobedient hound. Therefore, ye are welcome to do the same by me. Ye have taken what ye thought to be a sure mode o' getting a husband for ane o' your *winsome* daughters; but, in the present instance, it has proved a wrong one, auld man. Do your worst, and there will be Scotts enow left to revenge the death o' the laird o' Harden."

"There, then, is my thumb, young braggart," exclaimed Sir Gideon, "that I winna hinder ye in your choice; for to-morrow ye shall be exalted as Haman was; and let those revenge your death who dare."

"Maister!—dear maister!" cried Simon, wringing his hands, "will ye sacrifice me also, and break the hearts o' my puir wife and family! O sir! accept o' Sir Gideon's proposal, and marry his dochter."

"Silence! ye milk-livered slave!" cried the young laird "Do ye pretend to bear the name o' Scott, and yet tremble like an ash leaf at the thought o' death!"

"Ye will excuse me, sir," retorted Simon, "but I tremble at no such thing; only, as I have already remarked, I have no particular ambition for being honoured wi' the exaltation o' the halter; and, moreover, I see no cause why a man should die unnecessarily, or where death can be avoided. Sir Gideon," added he, "humble prisoner as I at this moment am, and in your power, I leave it to you if ever ye saw onything in my conduct in the field o' battle, (and ye have seen me there,) that could justify ony ane in calling me either milk-livered or a coward? But, sir, I consider it would be altogether unjustifiable to deprive ane o' life, which is always precious, merely because my maister is stubborn, and winna marry your daughter. But, oh, sir, I am not a very auld man yet, and if ye will set me at liberty, though I am now a married man, in the event o' my ever becoming a widower, I gie ye my solemn promise that I will marry ony o' your dochters that ye please!"

"Audacious idiot!" exclaimed the old knight, raising his hand and striking poor Simon to the ground.

"Sir Gideon Murray!" cried the young laird fiercely, "are ye such a base knave as to strike a fettered prisoner! Shame fa' ye, man! where is the pride o' the Murrays now?"

Sir Gideon evidently felt the rebuke, and withdrawing from the apartment, said, as he departed—"Remember that when the sun-dial shall to-morrow note the hour of twelve, so surely shall ye be brought forth—and a wife shall be your lot, or the wuddy your doom."

"Leave me!" cried the youth impatiently, "and the gallows be it—my choice is made. Till my last hour trouble me not again."

"Sir! sir!" cried Simon, "I beg, I pray that ye will alter your determination. There is surely naething so awful in the idea o' marriage, even though your wife should have a face not particularly weel-favoured. Ye dinna ken, sir, but that the young woman's looks are her worst fault; and indeed, I hae heard her spoken o' as a lassie o' great sense and discretion, and as having an excellent temper; and, oh, sir, if ye kenned as weel what it is to be married as I do ye would think that a good temper was a recommendation far before beauty."

"Hold thy fool's tongue, Simon," cried the laird; "would ye disgrace the family wi' which ye make it your boast to be connected, when in the power and presence o' its enemies? Do as ye see me do—die and defy them."

It was drawing towards midnight, when the prison-door was opened, and the sentinel who stood watch over it admitted a female dressed as a domestic.

"What want ye, or whom seek ye, maiden?" inquired the laird.

"I come," answered she mildly, "to speak wi' the laird o' Harden, and to ask if he has any dying commands that poor lassie could fulfil for him."

"Dying commands!" responded Simon; "oh, are those no awful words!—and can ye still be foolhardy enough to say ye winna marry?"

"Who sent ye, maiden?—or who are ye?" continued the laird.

"A despised lassie, sir," answered she, "and an attendant upon Sir Gideon's lady, in whom ye hae a true and steadfast friend; though I doubt that, as ye hae refused poor Meg, her intercession will avail ye little."

"And wherefore has Lady Murray sent you here?" he continued.

"Just, sir, because she is a mother, and has a mother's heart; and, as ye hae a mother and sisters who will now be mourning for ye at Oakwood, she thought that, belike, ye would hae something to say that ye would wish to hae communicated to them; and, if it be sae, I am come to offer to be your messenger."

"Maiden!" said he, with emotion, "speak not of my poor mother, or you will unman me, and I would wish to die as becomes my father's son."

"That's right, hinny," whispered Simon; "speak to him about his mother again—talk about her sorrow, poor lady, and her tears, and distraction, and mourning—and I hae little doubt but we shall get him to marry Meg, or do onything else, and I shall get back to my family, after a'."

"What is it that ye whisper, Simon, in the maiden's ear?" inquired the laird, sternly.

"Oh, naething, sir—naething, I assure ye," answered Simon, falteringly; "I was only saying that, if ye sent her ower to Oakwood wi' a message to your poor, honoured, wretched mother, that she would inquire for my poor widow, Janet, and my bits o' bairns, and that she would tell them that nothing troubled me upon my death-bed——no, no, not my death-bed, but——I declare I am ashamed to think o't!——I was saying that I was simply telling her to inform my wife and bairns, that nothing distracted me in the hour o' death, but the thought o' being parted from them."

Without noticing the evasive reply of his dependant and fellow-prisoner, the laird, addressing the intruder, said—"Ye speak as a kind and considerate lassie. I would like to send a scrape o' a pen to my poor mother, and, if ye will be its bearer, she will reward ye."

"And, belike," she replied, "ye would like to hear if the good lady has an answer back, or to learn how she bore the tidings o' your unhappy fate."

"Before you could return," said he, "the time appointed by my adversary for my execution will be past, and I shall feel for my mother's sorrows with the sympathy of a disembodied spirit."

"But," added she, "if ye would like to hear from your poor mother, or, belike, to see her—for there may be family matters that ye would wish to have arranged—I think, through the influence of my lady, Sir Gideon could be prevailed upon to grant ye a respite for three or four days; and, as he isna a man that keeps his passion long, perhaps, by that time, he may be disposed to save your life upon terms that would be more acceptable."

"No, maiden," he replied; "he is my enemy; and from him I wish no terms—no clemency. Let him fulfil his purpose—I will die; but my death shall be revenged; and tell my mother that it was my latest injunction that she should command every follower of our house to avenge her son's death, while there is a Murray left in all Scotland to repent the deed o' the knight o' Elibank."

"Oh, sweet young ma'am, or mistress!" cried Simon; "bear the lady no such message; but rather, as ye hae said, try if it be possible to get your own good lady to persuade Sir Gideon to spare our lives for a few days; and, as ye say, the edge o' the auld knight's revenge may be blunted by that time, or, perhaps, my worthy young maister may be brought to see things in a clearer light, and, perhaps, to marry Miss Margaret, by which means our lives may be spared. For it is certainly the height o' madness in him to sacrifice my life and his own, rather than marry her before he has seen her."

"Simon," interrupted the laird, "the maiden has spoken kindly; let her endeavour to procure a respite—a reprieve for you. In your death my enemy can have no gratification; but for me—leave me to myself."

"O sir," replied Simon, "ye wrong me—ye mistake my meaning a'thegither. If ye are to die, I will die also; but do ye no think it would be as valorous and mair rational, at least to see and hear the young leddy, before ye determine to die rather than to marry her?"

"And hae ye," said the maiden, addressing the laird, "preferred the gallows to poor Meg, without even seeing her?"

"If I haena seen her, I hae heard o' her," said he; "and by all accounts her countenance isna ane that ony man would desire to see accompanying him through the world like a shadow at his oxter."

"Belike," said the maiden, "she has been represented to you worse than she looks like—if ye saw her, ye might change your opinion; and, perhaps, after a', that she isna bonny is a' that any one can say against her."

"Wheesht, lassie!" said he; "I winna be forced to onything. A Scott may be led, but he winna drive. I have nae wish to see the face o' your young mistress, for I winna hae her. But you speak as one that has a feeling heart, and before I trust ye wi' my last letter to my poor mother, I should like to have a glance at your face, and by your countenance I shall judge whether or not it will be safe to trust ye."

"I doubt, sir," replied she, throwing back the hood that covered her head, "ye will see as little in my features as ye expect to find in my young mistress's, to recommend me; but, sir, ye ought to remember that jewels are often encrusted in coarser metals, and ye will often find a delicious kernel within an unsightly shell."

"Ye speak sweetly, and as sensibly as sweet," said he, raising the flickering lamp, which burned before them upon a small table, and gazing upon her countenance; "and I will now tell ye, lassie, that, if your features be not beautiful, there is honesty and kindliness written upon every line o' them; and though ye are a dependant in the house o' my enemy, I will trust ye. Try if I can obtain writing materials to address a few lines to my mother, and I will confide in you to deliver them."

"Ye may confide in me," rejoined she, "and the writing materials which ye desire I hae brought wi' me. Write, and not only shall your letter be faithfully delivered, but, as ye hae confided in me, I will venture to say that your life shall be spared until ye receive her answer; for I may say that what I request, Lady Murray will try to see performed. And if I can find any means in my power by which ye can escape, it shall not be lang that ye will remain a prisoner."

"Thank ye!—doubly thank ye!" cried Simon; "ye are a good and a kind creature; and though my maister refuses to marry your mistress, yet had I been single I would hae married you. But, oh, when ye go wi' the letter to his mother, my honoured lady, will ye just go away down to a bit white house which lies by the river side, about a mile and a half aboon Selkirk, and there ye will find my poor wife and bairns—or rather I should say my unhappy widow and my orphans—and tell them—oh! tell my wife—that I never kenned how dear she was to me till now, but that if she marries again that my ghost will haunt her, night and day; and tell also the bairns, that, above everything, I charge them to be good to their mother."

The young laird sat down, and, writing a letter to his

mother, entrusted it to the hands of the stranger girl. He raised her hand to his lips as she withdrew, and a tear trickled down his cheeks as he thanked her.

It was early on the following morning that Meikle-mouthed Meg as she was called, requested an interview with her father, which being granted, after respectfully rendering obeisance before him, she said—"So, faither, I understand that it is your pleasure that I shall this day become the wife o' young Scott o' Harden. I think, sir, that it is due to the daughter o' a Murray o' Elibank, that she should be courted before she gies her hand. The young man has never seen me; he kens naething concerning me; an' never will yer dochter disgrace ye by gieing her hand to a man who only accepted it to save his neck from a hempen cord. Faither, if it be your command that I am to marry him, I will an' must marry him; but, before I just make a venture upon him for better for worse, an' for life, I wud like to hae some sma' acquaintance wi' him, to see what sort o' lad he is, and what kind o' temper he has; and, therefore, faither, I humbly crave that ye will put off the death or the marriage for a week at least, that I may hae an opportunity o' judging for mysel, how far it would be prudent or becoming in me to consent to be his wife."

"Gie me your hand, Meg," cried the old knight; "I didna think ye had as muckle spirit and gumption in ye as to say what ye hae said. But your request is useless; for he has already, point blank, refused to hae ye; an' there is naething left for him, but, before sunset, to strike his heels against the bark o' the auld elm tree."

"Say not that, faither," said she—"let me at least hae four days to become acquainted wi' him; and if in that time he doesna mak a request to you to marry me without ony dowry, then will I say that I look even waur than I get the name o' doing."

"He shall have four days, Meg," cried the old knight; "for your sake he will have them; but if, at the end o' four days, he shall refuse to take ye, he shall hang before this window, and his poor half-crazed companion shall bear him company."

With this assurance, Agnes, or, as she was called, Meg, left her father, and bethought her of how she might save the prisoners and secure a husband.

The mother of the laird sat in the midst of her daughters, mourning for him, and looking from the window of the tower, as though, in every form that appeared in the distance, she expected to see him, or at least to gather tidings regarding him; when information was brought to her that he was the prisoner of Murray of Elibank.

Then," cried she, and wept, "the days o' my winsome Willie are numbered, and his death is determined on; for often has Sir Gideon declared he would gie a' the lands o' Elibank for his head. My Willie is my only son, my first-born, and my heart's hope and treasure; and, oh, if I lose him now, if I shall never again hear his kindly voice say '*mother!*' nor stroke down his yellow hair—wi' him that has made me sonless I shall hae a day o' lang and fearfu' reckoning; cauld shall be the hearth-stane in the house o' many a Murray, and loud their lamentation."

Her daughters wept with her for their brother's fate; but they wist not how to comfort her; and, while they sat mingling their tears together, it was announced to them that an humble maiden, bearing a message from the captive laird, desired to speak with her.

"Shew her in!—take me to her!" cried the mother, impatiently. "Where is she?—what does she say—or what does my Willie say?" And the maiden, who has been mentioned as having visited the laird in his prison, was ushered into her presence.

"Come to me, lassie—come and tell me a'," cried the old lady; "what message does Willie Scott send to his heart-broken mother?"

'He has sent you this bit packet, ma am," replied the bearer; "and I shall be right glad to take back to him whatever answer ye may hae to send."

"And wha are ye, young woman," inquired the lady "that speaks sae kindly to a mother, an' takes an interest in the fate o' my Willie?"

"A despised lassie," was the reply; "but ane that would risk her ain life to save either yours or his."

"Bless you for the words!" replied Lady Scott, as she broke the seal of her son's letter, and read:—

"My mother, my honoured mother—Fate has delivered me into the power of Murray of Elibank, the enemy of our house. He has doomed me to death, and I die to-morrow; but sit not down to mourn for me, and uselessly to wring the hands and tear the hair; but rouse every Scott upon the Borders to rise up and be my avenger. If ye bewail the loss o' a son, let them spare o' the Murrays neither son nor daughter. Rouse ye and let a mother's vengeance nerve your arm! Poor Simon o' Yarrow-foot is to be my companion in death, and he whines to meet his fate with the weakness of a woman, and yearns a perpetual yearning for his wife and bairns. On that account I forgie him the want o' heart and determination which he manifests; but see ye to them, and take care that they be provided for. As for me, I shall meet my doom wi' disdain for my enemy in my eyes and on my tongue. Even in death he shall feel that I despise him; and a proof o' this I have given him already; for he has offered to save my life, providing I would marry his daughter, Meikle-mouthed Meg. But I have scorned his proposal."——

"Ye were right, Willie! ye were right, lad!" exclaimed his mother, while the letter shook in her hand; but, suddenly bursting into tears, she continued—"No, no! my bairn was wrong—very wrong. Life is precious, and at all times desirable; and, for his poor mother's sake, he ought to have married the lassie, what'er she may be like." And, turning to the bearer of the letter, she inquired—"And what like may the leddy be, the marrying o' whom would save my Willie's life?"

"Ye have nae doubt heard, my leddie," replied the stranger, "that she isna what the world considers to be a likely lass—though, take her as she is, and ye might find a hantle worse wives than poor Meg would make; and, as to her features, I may say that she looks much the same as I do; and, if she doesna appear better, she at least doesna look ony waur."

"Then, if she be as ye say and look as ye say," continued the lady, "my poor headstrong Willie ought to marry her. But, oh! weel do I ken that in everything he is just his faither owre again, and ye might as weel think o' moving the Eildon Hills as force him to onything".

She perused the concluding part of her son's letter, in which he spoke enthusiastically of the kindness shewn him by the fair messenger, and of the promise she had made to liberate him if possible. "And if she do," he added, "whatever be her parentage, on the day that I should be free, she should be my wife, though I have preferred death to the hand o' Sir Gideon's *comely* daughter."

"Lassie," said the lady, weeping as she spoke, "my poor Willie talks a deal o' the kindness ye have shewn him in the hour o' his distress, and for that kindness his mother's heart thanks ye. But do you not think that it is possible that I could accompany ye to Elibank; and, if ye can devise no means for him to escape, perhaps, if ye could get me admitted into his presence, when he saw his poor distressed mother upon her knees before him, his heart would soften and he would marry Sir Gideon's daughter, ill-featured though she may be."

"My leddy," answered the stranger maiden, "it is little that I can promise, and less that I can do; but, if ye desire to see yer son, I think I could answer for accomplishing

yer request; an though nae guid micht come oot o't, I could also say that I wud see ye safe back again."

Within an hour, Lady Scott, disguised as a peasant, and carrying a basket on her arm, set out for Elibank, accompanied by the fair stranger.

Leaving them upon their melancholy journey, we shall return to the young laird. From the windows of his prison-house, he beheld the sun rise which was to be the last on which he was to look. He heard the sentinels, who kept watch over him, relieve each other; he heard them pacing to and fro before the grated door, and as the sun rose towards the south, proclaiming the approach of noon, the agitation of Simon increased. He sat in a corner of the prison, and strove to pray; and, as the footsteps of the sentinels quickened, he groaned in the bitterness of his spirit. At length, the loud booming of the gong announced that the dial-plate upon the turret marked the hour of twelve. Simon clasped his hands together. "Maister! maister!" he cried, "our hour is come, an one word from yer lips could save us baith, an' ye winna speak it. The very holding oot o' yer hand could do it, but ye are stubborn even unto death."

"Simon," said the laird. "I hae left it as an injunction upon my mother, that yer wife an' weans be provided for—she will fulfil my request. Therefore, be ye content. Die like a man an' dinna disgrace both yourself an' me."

"O sir! I winna disgrace, or in any manner dishonour ye," said Simon—"only I do not see the smallest necessity for us to die, and especially when both our lives could be saved by yer doing yerself a good turn."

While he spoke, the sound of the sentinels' footsteps, pacing to and fro, ceased. The prison-door was opened; Simon fell upon his knees—the laird looked towards the intruder proudly.

"Your lives are spared for another day," said a voice, "that the laird o' Harden may have time to reflect upon the proposal that has been made to him. But let him not hope that he will find mercy upon other terms; or that, refusing them for another day, his life will be prolonged."

The door was again closed, and the bolts were drawn. The spirit of Sir Gideon was too proud and impatient, to spare the lives of his prisoners for four days, as he had promised to his daughter to do, and he now resolved that they should die upon the following day.

The sun had again set, and the dim lamp shed around its fitful and shadowy light from the table of the prison-room, when the maiden, who had carried the letter to the laird's mother, again entered.

"This is kind, very kind, gentle maiden," said he; "would that I could reward ye! An' hoo fares it with my puir mother?—what answer does she send?"

"An' oh, ma'am, or mistress!" cried Simon, "hoo fares it wi' my dear wife an' bairns? I hope ye told them all that I desired ye to say. Hoo did she bear the news o' being made a widow? An' what did she say to my injunction, that she was never to marry again?"

"Ye talk wildly, man," said the maiden, addressing Simon; "it wasna in my power to carry yer commands to yer wife; but, I trust, it will be longer than ye expect before she will be a widow, or hae it in her power to marry again?"

"O ye angel! ye perfect picture!" cried Simon, "what is that which I hear ye say? Do ye really mean to tell me that I stand a chance o' being saved, an that I shall see my wife an' bairns again?

"Even so," said she; "but whether you do or do not, rests with yer master."

"Speak not o that, sweet maiden," said the laird; "but tell me, what says my mother? Hoo does she bear the fate o' her son; an' hoo does she promise to avenge my death."

"She is as one whose heart-strings are torn asunder," was the reply, "an' who refuses to be comforted; but she wud rather hae another dochter than lose an only son; an' her prayer is, that ye will live and mak her happy, by marrying the maiden ye despise."

"What!" he cried, "has even my mother so far forgot herself, as to desire me to marry the dochter o' oor enemy, whom no other man could be found to take! It shall never be. I wud obey her in onything but that."

"But," said the maiden, "I still think ye are wrong to reject an' despise puir Meg before that ye hae seen her. She may baith be better an' look better than ye are aware o'. There are as guid as Scott o' Harden who hae said, that were it in their power they wud mak her their wife; an' ye should remember sir, that it will be as pleasant for you to hear the blithe laverock singing owre yer head, as for another person to hear the wind soughing and the long grass rustling owre yer grave. Ye hae another day to live, an' see her, an' speak to her, before ye decide rashly. Yours is a cruel doom, but Sir Gideon is a wrathfu' man; an' even for his ain flesh an' bluid he has but sma' compassion when his anger is provoked. Death, too, is an awfu' thing to think aboot; an', therefore, for yer ain sake, an' for the sake o' yer puir distressed mother an' sisters, dinna come to a rash determination."

"Sweet lass," replied he, "I respect the sympathy which ye evince; but never shall Sir Gideon Murray say that, in order to save my life, he terrified me into a marriage wi' his daughter. An' when my puir mother's grief has subsided, she will think differently o' my decision."

"Weel, sir," said the maiden, "since ye will not listen to my advice—an' I own that I hae nae richt to offer it—I will send ane to ye whose persuasion will hae mair avail."

"Whom will ye send?" inquired the laird; "it isna possible that ye can hae been playing me false?"

"No," she replied, "that isna possible; an' from her that I will send to you, ye will see whether or not I hae kept my word, guid an' truly, to fulfil yer message."

So saying, she withdrew, leaving him much wondering at her words, and yet more at the interest which she took in his fate. But she had not long withdrawn when the prison-door was again opened, and Lady Scott rushed into the arms of her son.

"My mother!" cried he, starting back in astonishment—"my mother!—hoo is this?"

"Oh, joy, an' gladness, an' every blessing be upon my honoured lady! for noo I may stand some chance o' walkin' back upon my ain feet to see my family. Oh! yer leddyship," Simon added, "join yer prayers to my prayers, an' try if ye can persuade my maister to marry Sir Gideon's dochter, an' thereby save baith his life an' mine."

But she fell upon the neck of her son, and seemed not to hear the words which Simon addressed to her.

"O my son! my son!" she cried; "since there is no other way by which yer life can be ransomed, yield to the demand o' the fierce Murray. Marry his daughter an' live—save yer wretched mother's life; for yer death. Willie, wud be mine also."

"Mother!" answered he vehemently, "I will never accept life upon such terms. I am in Murray's hands, but the day may come—yea, see ye that it does come—when he shall fall into the hands o' the Scotts o Harden; an' see ye that ye do to him as he shall have done to me. But, tell me mother, hoo are ye here? Wherefore did ye venture, or hoo got ye permission to see me? Ken ye not that if he found ye in his power, upon yer life also he wud fix a ransom?"

"The kind lassie," she replied, "that brought the letter from ye, at my request conducted me here and con

trived to get me permission to see ye; an' she says that my visit shall not come to the knowledge o' Sir Gideon. But, O Willie! as ye love an' respect the mother that bore ye, an' that nursed ye nicht an' day at her bosom, dinna throw awa yer life when it is in yer power to save it, but marry Miss Murray, an' ye may live, an' so may I, to see many happy days; for, from a' that I hae heard, though not weel-favoured, she is a young lady o' an excellent disposition!"

"Oh! that's richt, my leddy," interrupted Simon; "urge him to marry her, for it wud be a dreadfu' thing for him an' I to be gibbeted, as a pair o' perpetual spectacles for the Murrays to mak a jest o'. Ye ken if he does marry, an' if he finds he doesna like her, he can leave her; or he needna live wi' her; or, perhaps she may soon die; an' ye will certainly agree that marriage, ony way ye tak it, is to be desired, a thousand times owre, before a violent death. Therefore, urge him again, yer leddyship, for he may listen to what ye say, though he despises my words, an' will not hearken to my advice."

"Simon," said the laird, "never shall a Murray hae it in his power to boast that he struck terror into the breast o' a Scott o' Harden. My determination is fixed as fate. I shall welcome my doom, an' meet it as a man. Come, dear mother," he added, "weep not, nor cause me to appear in the presence o' my enemies with a blanched cheek. Hasten to avenge my death, an' think that in yer revenge yer son lives again. Come, though I die, there will be moonlight again."

She hung upon his breast and wept, but he turned away his head and refused to listen to her entreaties. The young maiden again entered the prison and said—

"Ye must part noo, for in a few minutes Sir Gideon will be astir, an' should he find yer leddyship here, or discover that I hae brought ye, I wud hae sma' power to gie ye protection."

"Fareweel, dear mother!—fareweel!" exclaimed the youth, grasping her hand.

"O Willie! Willie!" she cried, "did I bear ye, to see ye come to an end like this! Bairn! bairn! live—for yer mother's sake, live!"

"Fareweel, mother!—fareweel!" he again cried, and the sentinel conducted her from the apartment.

It again drew towards noon. The loud gong again sounded, and Simon sank upon his knees in despair, as the voice of the warder was heard crying—"It is the hour! prepare the prisoners for execution!"

Again the prison-door was opened, and Sir Gideon, with wrath upon his brow, stood before them.

"Weel, youngster," said he, addressing the laird, "yer hour is come. What is yer choice—a wife or the wuddy?"

"Lead me to execution, ye auld knave," answered the laird, scornfully, "an' ken, that wi' the hemp around my neck, in contempt o' you an' yours, I will spit upon the ground where ye tread."

"Here, guards!" cried Sir Gideon; "lead forth William Scott o' Harden to execution. Strap him upon the nearest tree, an' there let him hang until the bauldest Scott upon the Borders dare to cut him down. As for you," added he, addressing Simon, 'I seek not your life; depart, ye are free; but, beware hoo ye again fall into the hands o' Gideon Murray."

"No, sir!" exclaimed Simon, "though I am free to acknowledge that I hae nae ambition to die before it is the wise will an' purpose o' nature, yet I winna, I canna, leave my dear young maister; an' if he be to suffer, I will share his fate. Only, Sir Gideon, there is ae thing I hae to say, an that is, that he is young, an' he is proud an' stubborn like yersel', an' though he will not, o' his ain free will an accord, nor in obedience to yer commandments, marry yer dochter—is it not possible to compel him, whether he be willing or no, an' so save his life, as it were, in spite o' him?"

"Away with both!" cried the knight, striking his ironed heel upon the ground, and leaving the apartment.

"Then, if it is to be, it must be," said Simon, folding his arms in resignation, "an' there is no help for it! But, oh, maister! maister! ye hae acted foolishly."

They were led from the prison-house, and through the court-yard, towards a tall elm tree, round which all the retainers of Sir Gideon were assembled to witness the execution; and the old knight took his place upon an elevated seat in the midst of them.

The executioners were preparing to perform their office when Agnes, or Muckle-mouthed Meg, as she was called, came forth, with a deep veil thrown over her face, and sinking on her knee before the old knight, said, imploringly—"A boon, dear faither—yer dochter begs a simple boon."

"Ye tak an ill season to ask it, Meg," said the knight, angrily; "but what may it be?"

She whispered to him earnestly for a few minutes, during which his countenance exhibited indignation and surprise; and when she had finished speaking, she again knelt before him and embraced his knees.

"Rise, Meg, rise!" said he, impatiently, "for yer sake, an' at yer request, he shall hae another chance to live." And, approaching the prisoner, he added—"William Scott, ye hae chosen death in preference to the hand o' my dochter. Will ye noo prefer to die rather than marry the lassie that ran wi' the letter to yer mother, an' without my consent brought her to see ye?"

"Had another asked me the question," said the laird, "though I ken not who she is, yet she has a kind heart, and I should hae said 'No', an' offered her my hand, heart, an fortune; but, to you, Sir Gideon, I only say—do yer worst."

"Then, Willie, my ain Willie!" cried his mother, who at that moment rushed forward, "another does request ye to marry her, an' that is yer ain mother!"

"An'," said Agnes, stepping forward, and throwing aside the veil that covered her face, "puir Meg, owre whom ye gied a preference to the gallows, also requests ye!"

"What!" exclaimed the young laird, grasping her hand, "is the kind lassie that has striven, night and day, to save me—the very Meg that I hae been treating wi' disdain?"

"In troth am I," she replied, "an' do ye prefer the wuddy still?"

"No," answered he; and turning to Sir Gideon, he added—"Sir, I am now willing that this ceremony end in matrimony."

"Be it so," said the old knight, and the spectators burst into a shout.

The day that began with preparations for death, ended in a joyful bridal. The honour of knighthood was afterwards conferred upon the laird; and Meg bore unto him many sons and daughters, and was, as the reader will be ready to believe, one of the best wives in Scotland; while Simon declared that he never saw a better-looking woman in Ettrick Forest, his own wife and daughters not excepted.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

WILLIE WASTLE'S ACCOUNT OF HIS WIFE

"Sic a wife as Willie had!
I wadna gie a button for her"

BURNS.*

"It was a very cruel dune thing in my neebor, Robert Burns, to mak a sang aboot my wife and me," said Mr William Wastle, as he sat with a friend over a jug of reeking toddy, in a tavern near the Bridge-end in Dumfries, where he had been attending the cattle market; "I didna think it was neebor-like," he added; "indeed, it was a rank libel upon baith her and me; and I took it the worse, inasmuch as I always had a very high respect for Maister Burns. Though he said that I 'dwalt on Tweed,' and that I 'was a wabster,' yet everybody kenned wha the sang was aimed at. Neither did my wife merit the description that has been drawn o' her; for, though she was nae beauty, and hadna a face like a wax-doll, yet there were thousands o' waur looking women to be met wi' than my Kirsty; and to say that her mither was a 'tinkler,' was very unjustifiable, for her parents were as decent and respectable people, in their sphere o' life, as ye would hae found in a' Nithsdale. Her faither had a small farm which joined on with one that I took a lease o', when I was about one-and-twenty. Kirsty was about three years aulder; and, though not a bonny woman, she was, in many respects, as ye shall hear in the coorse o' my story, a very extraordinary one. I was in the habit o' seeing her every day, and as I sometimes was working in a field next to her, I had every opportunity o' observing her industry, and that, frae mornin' till nicht, she was aye eident. This gave me a far higher opinion o' her than if I had seen her gaun aboot wi' a buskit head; and often, at meal-times, I used to stand and speak to her owre the dyke. But, after we had been acquainted in this manner for some months, when the cheerfu' summer weather came in, and the grass by the dyke-sides was warm and green, and the bonny gowans blossomed amang it, I louped owre the dyke, and we sat doun and took our dinners together. I couldna have believed it possible that a bit bear bannock and a drap skim milk wad gang doun sae deliciously, but never before had I partaken o' onything that was sae pleasant to the palate. One day I was quite surprised, when I found that my arm had slipped unconsciously round her waist, and, drawing her closer to my side, I seighed, and said—'C Kirsty, woman!'

"She pulled away my hand from her waist, and looking me in the face, said—'Weel, Willie, man, what is't?'

"'Kirsty,' said I, 'I like ye.'

"'I thocht as meikle,' quoth she, 'but could ye no hae said sae at ance.'

"'Perhaps I could, dear,' said I; 'but ye ken true love is aye blate; however, if ye hae nae objections, I'll gang yont, after fothering-time the nicht, and speak to yer faither and mither; and if they hae nae objections, and ye have yer providin' ready, wi' yer guid-will and consent, I shall gie up oor names, and we shall he cried on Sabbath first.'

"'Oh,' said she, 'I haena lived for five-and-twenty years without expectin' to get a guidman some day; and I hae had my providin' ready since I was eighteen, an' a' o' my ain spinnin' an bleachin', an' the lint bocht wi' what I had wrocht for; so that I am behauden to naebody. My faither and mither have mair sense than to cast ony obstacle in the way o' my weelfare; and, as ye are far frae bein disagreeable to me, if we are to be married, it may as weel be sune as syne, and we may be cried on Sunday if ye think proper.'

"'O Kirsty, woman!' cried I, and I drew my arm round her waist again, "ye hae made me as happy as a prince! I hardly ken which end o' me is upmost!'

"'Na, Willie,' said she, 'there is nae necessity for ony nonsensical raptures; ye ken perfectly weel that yer head is upmost, though I hae heard my faither talk about some idiots that he ca's philosophers, who say that the world whirls roond aboot like a cart-wheel on an axletree, and that ance in every twenty-four hours our feet are upmost, and our head downmost; but it will be lang or onybody get me to believe in sic balderdash! As to yer being happy at present, it shall be nae faut o' mine if ye are not aye sae; and if ye aye be as I would wish ye to be, ye will never be unhappy.'

"Such, as near as I can recollect, is not only the history, but the exact words o' oor courtship. Her faither and mither gied their consent withoot the slightest hesitation. I remember her faither's words to me were—'Weel, William, frae a' that I hae seen o' ye, ye appear to be a very steady and industrious young man, and ane that is likely to do weel in the world. I hae seen, also, wi' great satisfaction, that ye are very regular in yer attendance upon the ordinances; there hasna been a Sabbath, since ye cam to be oor neebor, that I hae missed ye oot o' yer seat in the kirk. Frae a' that I hae heard concernin' ye also, ye hae always been a serious, sober, and weel-behaved young man. These things are a great satisfaction to a faither, when he finds them in the lad that his dochter wishes to marry. Ye hae my consent to tak Kirsty; and, though I say it, I believe ye will find her to mak as industrious, carefu', and kind a wife, as ye would hae found if ye had sought through a' broad Scotland for ane. I will say it, however, and be-

* Mr Allan Cunningham, in his Life of Burns, states the following particulars respecting Willie's wife:—viz., that "He was a farmer, who lived near Burns, at Ellisland. She was a very singular woman—tea, she said, would be the ruin of the nation; sugar was a sore evil; wheaten bread was only fit for babes; earthenware was a pickpocket, wooden floors were but fit for thrashing upon; slated roofs, cold; feathers good enough for fowls. In short, she abhorred change; and whenever anything new appeared—such as harrows with iron teeth—Ay! ay!' she would exclaim, 'ye'll see the upshot!' Of all modern tnings she disliked china most—she called it 'burnt clay,' and said 'it was only fit for haudin' the broo o' stinkin' weeds,' as she called tea. On one occasion, an English dealer in cups and saucers asked so much for his wares, that he exasperated a peasant, who said, 'I canna purchase, but I ken ane that will. Gang there,' said he, pointing to the house of Willie's wife, 'dinna be blate or burd-moothed; ask a guid penny—she has the siller!' Away went the poor dealer, spread out his wares before her, and summed up all by asking a double price. A blow from her crummock was his instant reward, which not only fell on his person, but damaged his china. 'I'll learn ye,' quoth she, as she heard the saucers jingle, 'to come wi' yer brazent English face, and yer bits o' burnt clay to me!' She was an unlovely dame—her daughters, however, were beautiful."

fore her face, that there are some things in which she takes it o' her mother, and in which she will nae her ain way. But this is her only faut. I'm sure ye'll ne'er hae cause to complain o' her wasting a bawbee, or o' her allooing even the heel o' a kebbuck to gang to unuse. It is needless for me to say mair; but ye hae my full and free consent to marry when ye like.'

"Then up spoke the auld guidwife, and said—'Weel, Willie, lad, if you and Kirsty hae made up yer minds to mak a bargain o' it, I am as little disposed to oppose yer inclinations as her faither is. A gnid wife, I sincerely believe, ye will find her prove to ye; and though her faither says that in some things she will be like me, and have her ain way, let me tell ye, lad, that is owre often necessary for a woman to do, wha is striving everything in her power for the guid o' her husband and the family, and sees him, just through foolishness as it were, striving against her. Ye are strange beings you men-folk to deal wi'. But ye winna find her a bare bride, for she has a kist fu' o' linen o' her ain spinnin', that may serve ye a' yer days, and even when ye are dead, though ye should live for sixty years."

"I thought it rather untimeous that the auld woman should hae spoken about linen for our grave-claes, before we were married; and I suppose my countenance had hinted as much, for Kirsty seemed to hae observed it, and she said —'My mother says what is and ought to be. It is aye best to be provided for whatever may come; and as Death often gies nae warning, I wadna like to be met wi' it, and to hae naething in the house to lay me out in like a christian.'

"I thought there was a vast deal o' sense and discretion in what she said; and though I didna like the idea o' such a premature providing o' winding-sheets, yet, after she spoke, I highly approved o' her prudence and forethought.

"It was on a Monday afternoon, about three weeks after the time I have been speaking o', that Kirsty, wi' her faither, and mother, and another young lass, an acquaintance o' hers, that was to be best maid, cam yont to my house for her and me to be married. I had sent for ane o' my brothers to be best-man, and he was with me waiting when they came. She was not in the least discomposed, but behaved very modestly. In a few minutes the minister arrived, when the ceremony immediately began, and within a quarter of an hour she was mine, and I was hers, for the term o' our natural lives.

"From the time that I took the farm, I had had no kind o' dishes in the house, save a wooden bowie or twa, four trenchers, three piggins, and twa bits o' tin cans, that I had bought from a travelling tinker for twopence a piece, and which Kirsty afterwards told me, were each a halfpenny a-piece aboon their value. I dinna think that I had tasted tea aboon a dozen times in the whole course o' my life; but as it was coming into general use, I thought it would look respectfu' to my bride, before her faither and mother, if I should hae tea upon our marriage day, and I could ask the minister to stop and tak a dish wi' us. I thought it would gie a character o' respectability to oor wedding. Therefore on the day afore the marriage, I went into Dumfries, and bought half a dozen o' bonny blue cups and saucers. I never durst tell Kirsty how meikle I gied for them. It was with great difficulty that I got them carried hame without breaking. I also bought two ounces o' the best tea, and a whole pound o' brown sugar.

"I had a servant lassie at the time, the dochter o' a hind in the neighbourhood; she was necessary to me to do the work about the house, and to milk twa kye that I kept, to mak the cheese, and a part o' the day to help the workers out wi' the bondage.

"'Lassie,' said I, when I got hame; 'do ye ken hoo to mak tea?'

"'I'm no very sure,' said she; 'but I think I do. I ance got a cup when I wasna weel, frae the farmer's wife that my faither lives wi'. I'll try.'

Here, then, says I: 'tak care o' thir, and see that ye dinna break them, or it will mak a breaking that ye wouldna like in your quarter's wages.' So I gied her the cups and saucers to put awa carefully into the press.

"'O maister,' says she; 'but noo, when I recollect, ye'll need a tea-kettle, and a tea-pat, and a cream-pat, and tea-spoons.'

"'Preserve me!' quoth I, 'the lassie is surely wrang in the head! Hoo mony articles o' *tea* and *cream* hae ye there? The parritch kettle will do as weel as a tea-kettle—where can be the difference? Your tea-pats I ken naething aboot, and as for a cream-pat, set down the cream-bowie; and as for spoons, ye fool, they dinna sip tea—they drink it—just sirple it, as it were, out o' the saucer.'

"O sir,' said she; 'but they need a little spoon to stir it round to mak the sugar melt—and that is weel minded, ye'll also require a sugar-basin.'

"'Hoots! toots! lassie,' cried I, 'do ye intend to ruin me? By yer account o' the matter, it would be almost as expensive to set up a tea equipage, as a chariot equipage. No, no; just do as the miller's wife o' Newmills did.'

"'And what way micht that be, sir?' inquired she.

"'Why,' said I, 'she took such as she had, and she never wanted! Just ye tak such as ye have—cogie, bowie, or tinniken, never ye mind—shew ye your dexterity.'

"'Very weel sir,' said she; 'I'll do the best I can.'

"But, just to exemplify another trait in my wife's character, I will tell ye the upshot o' my cups and saucers. I confess that I was in a state o' very considerable perturbation; not only on account o' what the lassie had told me about the want o' a tea-kettle, tea-pat, and so forth, but also that, including the minister, there were seven o' us, while I had but six cups; and I consoled mysel by thinking that, as Kirsty and I were now *one*, she might drink oot o' the cup and I would tak the saucer, so that a cup and saucer would serve us baith; and I was trusting to the ingenuity o' the lassie to find substitutes for the other deficiencies, when she came ben to where we were sitting, and going forward to Kirsty, says she—'Mistress, I have had the twa ounces o' tea on boiling in a chappin o' water, for the last twa hoors —do ye think it will be what is ca'ed *masked* noo?'

"'Tea!' said my new-made wife, wi' a look o' astonishment; 'is the lassie talking aboot *tea!* While I am to be in this house—and I suppose that is to be for my life—there shall nae poisonous foreign weed be used in it, nor come within the door, unless it be some drug that a doctor orders. Take it off the fire, and throw the broo awa. My certes! if young folk like us were to begin wi' sic extravagance, where would be the upshot? Na, na, Willie,' said she, turning round to me, 'let us just begin precisely as we mean to end. At all events, let us rather begin meanly, than end beggarly. I hae seen some folk, no aboon oor condition in life, mak a great dash on their wedding-day; and some o' them even hire gigs and coaches, forsooth, to tak a jaunt awa for a dozen o' miles! Poor things! it was the first and last time that ony o' them was either in gig or coach. But there shall be nae extravagance o' that kind for me. My faither and mother care naething about tea, for they hae never been used to it, and I'm sure that our friends here care as little; and, asking the minister's pardon, I am perfectly sure and certain, that tea can be nae treat to him, for he has it every day, and it will be standing ready for him when he gangs hame. The supper will be ready by eight o'clock, and those who wish it, may tak a glass o' speerits in the meantime—as it isna every day that they are at my wedding.'

"Her faither and mother looked remarkable proud and weel-pleased like at what she said, just as if they wished to say to me—'There's a wife for ye!' But I thought the minister seemed a good deal surprised, and in a few minutes he took up his hat, wished us much joy, and went away. For

my part, I didna think sae much aboot my bride's lecture, as I rejoiced that she thereby released me from the confusion I should have experienced in exposing the poverty o' my tea equipage.

"It was on the very morning after oor marriage, and just as I was gaun out to my wark—'Willie,' says she, 'I think we should single the turnips in the field west o' the house the day. The cotters' twa bondage lassies, and me, will be able to manage it by the morn's nicht.

"'O my dear,' quoth I, 'but I hae nae intention that ye should gang out into the fields to work, noo that ye are my wife. Let the servant lass gang out, and ye can look after the meat.'

"'Her! the idle taupie!' said she, 'we hae nae mair need for her than a cart has for a third wheel. Mony a time it has grieved me to observe her motions, when ye were out o' the way—and there would she and the other twa wenches been standing, clashing for an hour at a time, and no workin a stroke. I often had it in my mind to tell ye, but only I thought ye might think it forward in me, as I perceived ye had a kindness for me. But I can baith do all that is to do in-doors, and work out-by also, and at the end o' the quarter she shall leave.

"'Wi' a' my heart,' says I, 'if ye wish it;' for it struck me she micht be a wee thocht jealous o' the lassie; 'but there is no the sma'est necessity for you working out in the fields; for though she leaves, we can get a callant at threepence a-day, that would just do as meikle out-work as she does, and ye would hae naething to attend to but the affairs o' the house.'

"'O William!' replied she, 'I'm surprised to hear ye speak. Ye talk o' threepence a-day just as if it were naething. Hoo mony starving families are there, that threepence a-day would mak happy. It is my maxim never to spend a penny unless it be laid out to the greatest possible advantage. Ye should always keep that in view, every time ye put your hand in your pocket. He that saves a penny, has as mony thanks, in the lang run, as he that gies it awa. Threepence a-day, not including the Sabbath, is eighteenpence a-week; noo, you that are a scholar, only think how much that comes to in a twelvemonth. There are fifty-twa weeks in the year—that is, fifty-twa shillings; and fifty-twa sixpences is—how much?'

"'Twenty-six shillings, my dear,' said I, for I was quite amused at her calculation—the thing had never struck me before.

"'Weel' added she, 'fifty-two shillings and twenty-six shillings, put that together and see how much it comes to.'

"'Oh,' says I, after half a minute's calculation, it will just be three pounds, eighteen shillings, to a farthing.

"'Noo,' cried she, 'only think o' that!—three pounds eighteen shillings a-year; and ye would throw it away, just as if it were three puffs o' breath! Now, William, just listen to me and tak tent:—that is within twa shillings o' four pounds. It would far mair than cleed you and me, out and out, frae head to foot, from year's end to year's end. But at present the wench's meat and wages come to three times that, and therefore I am resolved, William, that while I am able to work, we shall neither throw away the one nor the other. It is best that we should understand each other in time; therefore, I just tell ye plainly, as I said yesterday, that as I wish to end, I mean to begin This very day, this very morning and hour, I go out wi' the bondage lassies to single the turnips; and, at the end o' the quarter, the lazy taupie butt-a-house, maun walk aboot her business.'

"'Weel, Kirsty, my darling,' says I, 'your way be it. Only I maun again say, that I had no wish or inclination whatever, to see you toiling and thinning turnips beneath a burning sun, or maybe taking them up and shawing them, when the cauld drift was cutting owre the face keen than razor.

"'Weel, William,' quoth she, 'it is needless saying any more words about it—it is my fixed and determined resolution.'

"'Then, hinny,' says I, 'if ye be absolutely resolved upon that, it is o' no manner o' use to say ony mair upon the subject, of course—your way be it.'

"So the servant lassie was discharged accordingly, and Kirsty did everything hersel. Wet day and dry day, whatever kind o' wark was to be done, there was she in the middle o' it, by her example spurring on the bondagers. Even when we began to hae a family, I hae seen her working in the fields wi' an infant on her back; and I am certain that for a dozen o' harvests, while she was aye at the head o' the shearers, there was aye our bairn that was youngest at the time, lying rowed up in a blanket at the foot o' the rig, and playing wi' the stubble to amuse itsel.

"There were many that said that I was entirely under her thumb, and that she had the maister-skep owre me. But that was a grand mistake, for she by no means exercised ony thing like maistership owre me; though I am free to confess, that I at all times paid a great degree o' deference to her opinions, and that she had a very particular and powerfu' way o' enforcing them. Yet, although I was in no way cowed by her, there wasna a bairn that we had, from the auldest to the youngest, that durst play *cheep* before her. She certainly had her family under great subjection, and their bringing up did her great credit. They were allowed time to play like ither bairns—but from the time that they were able to make use o' their hands, ye would hardly hae found it possible to come in upon us, and seen ane o' them idle. All were busy wi' something; and no ane o' them durst hae stepped owre a prin lying on the floor, without stooping doun to tak it up, or passed onything that was out o' its place without putting it right. For I will say for her again, that, if my Kirsty wasna a bonny wife, she was not only a thrifty but a tidy ane, and keepit every ane and every thing tidy around her.

"She was a strange woman for abhorring everything that was new-fangled. She was a most devout believer in, and worshipper o' the wisdom o' oor ancestors. She perfectly hated everything like change; and as to onything that implied speculation, ye micht as weel hae spoken o' profanation in her presence. She said she liked auld friends, auld customs, auld fashions; and was the sworn enemy o' a' the innovations on the practices and habits that had been handed doun frae generation to generation. I dinna ken if ever she heard the names Whig or Tory in her life; but if Tory mean an enemy o' change, then my Kirsty certainly was a Tory o' the very purest water.

"I dinna suppose that she believed there was such a word as *improvement* in the whole Dictionary. She would hae allooed everything to stand steadfast as Lot's wife, for ever and for ever. But, however, just to gie ye a specimen or twa o' her remarkable disposition:—I think it was about sixteen years after we were married, that I took a tack o' an adjoining farm, which was much larger than the ane we occupied. I was concious it would require every penny we had scraped thegither, and that we had sayed, to stock it. My wife was by no means favourable to my taking it. She said we kenned what we had done, but we didna ken what we might do; and it was better to go on as we were doing, than to risk oor a. I acknowledged that there was a vast deal o' truth in what she said; but, however, I saw that the farm was an excellent bargain, and I was resolved to tak it, say what she might, and therefore, though she was said to domineer owre me, yet, just to prove to every person round about that I was not under a wife's government. I did tak it. I had not had it twa years, when I began to find that thrashing wi' the flail would never answer Often, when the markets were on the rise, and when I could nae turned owre many pounds into my ain pocket, I found it was a'thegither impossible for me to get my corn thrashed in time to catch

the markets while they were high; and I am certain that, in the second year that I had the new farm, I lost at least a hundred pounds frae that cause alone—that is, I didna get a hundred pounds that I micht hae got, and that was much the same as losing it oot o' my pocket. Thrashing machines at that period were just beginning to come into vogue, but there was a terrible ootcry against them; and mony a ane said that they were an invention o' the Prince o' Darkness; for my part I wish he would never do mair ill upon the earth, than invent sic things as thrashing-machines. Hoo-ever, I saw plain and clearly the advantage that the machine had owre the flail, and I was determined to hae ane. But never did I see a woman in such a steer as the mention o' the thing put Kirsty in! She went perfectly wild aboot it.

"'What, William!' she cried, 'what do ye talk aboot? Losh me, man, have ye nae mair sense?—have ye nae discretion whatever? Will ye really rush upon ruin at a horse-race? Ye talk aboot getting a machine! How, I ask ye, now do ye expect that ever ye could prosper for a single day after, if ye were to throw oor twa decent barn-men oot o' employment, and their families oot o' bread? I just ask ye that question, William. Does na the proverb say—'Live and let live;' and hoo are men to live, if, by an invention o' the Enemy o' mankind, ye tak work oot o' their hands, and bread oot o' their mouths?"

"'Dear me, Kirsty!' said I, 'hoo is it possible that a woman o' your excellent sense can talk such nonsense? Ye see very weel that, if I had had a machine, I micht hae made a hundred pounds mair than I did by last year's crops—that, certainly, would hae been a good turn to us—and, tak my word for it, it is neither in the power nor in the nature o' the Evil One to do a guid turn to onybody.'

"'Willie,' quoth she, 'ye talk like a silly man—like a very silly man, indeed. If the Enemy o' mankind hadna it in his power to do for us what we tak to be for oor guid, hoo in the warld do ye think he could tempt us to our hurt? I say, that thrashing-machines are an invention o' his, and that they are ane o' the instruments he is bringing up for the ruin o' this country. It is him, and him alone, that is putting it into your head to buy ane o' his infernal devices, in order that he may not only ruin you, baith soul and body, by filling ye wi' a desire o' riches, an' making ye the oppressor and the robber o' the poor, but that, through your oppression and robbery, he may ruin them also, and bring them to shame or the gallows!'

"'Forgie me, Kirsty,' said I, 'what in a' the world do ye mean? Hoo is it possible that ye can talk aboot me as likely to be either an oppressor or a robber o' the poor? I'll declare there never was a beggar passed either me or my door, that ever I saw, but I gied him something. I'm sure, guidwife, ye baith ken better o' me, and think better o' me than to talk sae.'

"'Yes, William,' said she, 'I did think better o' ye; but I noo see distinctly that the Enemy is leading ye blindfolded to your ruin. First, through the pride o' your heart, he tempted ye to tak this big farm, that, as ye thocht, ye might hasten to be rich; and now he is seducing ye to buy ane o' his diabolical machines for the same end, and in order that ye may not only deprive honest men and their families o' bread, but, belike, rather than starve, tempt them to steal! And what ca' ye that but oppressing and robbing the poor. Hooever, buy a machine!—buy ane, and ye'll see what will be the upshot! If ye dinna repent it, say I'm no your wife.'

"I confess her words were onything but agreable to me, and they rather set me a hesitating hoo to act. Hooever my mind was bent upon buying the machine. I had said to several o' my neebors that I intended to hae ane put up; and I was convnced that, if I drew back o' my word, it would be said that my wife wouldna let me get it, and I would be made a general laughing-stock—and that was a thing that I held in greater dread than even my wife's lectures, severe as they sometimes were; therefore, reason or nane, I got a machine put up. It caused a very general outcry amongst a' the 'datal' men and their wives for miles round. At ae time I even thocht that they would mob me and pull it to pieces. But all their clamour was a mere snaw-flake fa'ing in the sea, compared wi' the perpetual dirdum that Kirsty rang in my ears about it. She actually threatened that judgments would follow, and I dinna ken a' what. But, on the morning o' the day that I yoked the horses into it, and began to thrash wi' it for the first time I declare to you that she took the six bairns wi' her, and absolutely went to her faither's, vowing to work for them until the blood sprang from her finger-ends, rather than live wi' a man that would be guilty o' such madness and iniquity.

"But having heard before dinner-time that I had had to employ a woman at sixpence a-day to feed into the machine, she came back as fast as her feet could carry her, wi' a' the bairns behint her, and ordering the stranger away, began to feed the machine hersel', and the bairns carried her the sheaves.

"I saw that out o' a spirit o' pure wickedness she was distressing hersel far beyond what there was the sma'est occasion for. It was as clear as day that indignation was working in her heart, like barm fermenting in a bottle, and just about half an hour before we were to leave off thrashing for the nicht, she was seized with a very alarming pain in the breast. I saw and said it was a hysterical affection, and was altogether the consequence o' the passion that she had given way to on account o' the unlucky machine. She, however, denied that there were such diseases in existence as either hysterical or nervous affections. They were sham disorders she said, that cam into the country wi' tea and spirit-drinking; and she assuredly was free from indulging in either the ane or the other. But she grew worse and worse, and was at last obliged to sit down upon some straw on the barn floor. I ventured forward to her, and said—'Kirsty, woman, ye had better gang awa into the house Ye will do yersel mair ill by sitting there, for there is a current o' air through the loft, which, after you being warm with working, may gie ye your death o' cauld. Rise up, dear, and gang awa into the house, and try if a glass o' usquebae will do ye ony guid.'

"Maister Burns, the poet, has said—

'She has an ee, she has but *ane*;'

but, certes, had he seen the look that she gied me as I then spoke to her, he would hae been satisfied that she had *twa!* I saw it was o' nae manner o' use for me either to offer advice, or to express sympathy. The wife o' an auld man that was called John Neilson, and who for several years had been our barn-man, came into the machine-loft at the time, and wi' a great deal o' concern she asked my wife what was like the matter wi' her. Now this auld Peggy Neilson had the reputation, for miles round, o being an extraordinary *skilly* woman. There wasna a bairn in the parish took a sair throat, or got a burned foot, or a cut finger, or took a *dwam* for a day or twa, but its mother said—'I maun hae Peggy Neilson spoken to aboot that bairn, before it be ower late.' Kirsty, therefore, told her hoo she was affected, when the other, wi' the confidence o' a doctor o' medicine brought up at the first college in the kingdom, said—'Then, ma'am, if that be the way ye feel, there is naething in the warld sae guid for ye as a blast o' the pipe. I aye carry a tinder-box and flint and steel wi' me, and ye are welcome to a whuff o' my cutty.'

"Now, Kirsty was a bitter enemy to baith smoking and snuffing in general; but she had great faith in the skill o' Peggy Neilson, and wad far rather hae done whatever she advised, than followed the prescription o' the best doctor in a' the land. She took the auld woman's pipe, therefore, and began to blaw through a spirit o' pain and perverseness at the same moment. As I anticipated, it soon made her dizzy in the

head, and she had to be led to the house. However, in a short time the pain she had been suffering was greatly abated, though whether the smoking contributed towards removing it or not, I dinna pretend to say. Just as she had been taen to the house, we were done wi' thrashing for the day, and I was very highly gratified wi' the day's wark.

"But I was very tired, and as soon as I had had my sowens I went to bed. I several times thought, and remarked it, that there was a sort o' burnt smell about.

"'Ay,' said Kirsty, who by this time was a great deal better; 'they who will use the engines o' forbidden agents maun expect to smell them, as in the end they will feel them.'

"Being conscious it was o' nae use to reason wi' her, for she in general had the better o' me in an argument, I tried to compose mysel to sleep. But it was in vain to think o' closing my een, for the smell o' burning grew stronger and stronger, and I was rising again, saying—'There is something burning aboot somewhere, and I canny rest until I hae seen what it is.

"'Nor let other folk rest either, said Kirsty.

"Just at that moment, oor eldest dochter, who was as perfect a picture o' beauty as ever man looked upon wi' eyes o' admiration, and who being alarmed by the smell, as well as me, had gane oot to examine from what it proceeded, came running oot o' breath, crying—'Faither! faither!—the barn and everything is on fire!'

"'O goodness!' cried I, as I threw on part o' my claes in the twinkling o' an ee; 'what wretch can hae been sae wicked as to do it?'

"'It's a judgment upon ye,' said Kirsty, 'for having such a thing about the place, after a' the admonitions ye had against it. I said ye would see what would be the upshot, and it hasna been lang o' coming.'

"'O ye tormentor o' my life!' cried I, as I ran oot o' the house; 'it's your handy-work!'

"'Mine!' exclaimed she. 'O ye heartless man that ye are, how dare ye presume either to say or think sic a thing!' and she followed me out.

"The whole stackyard was black wi' smoke—it was hardly possible to breathe—and a great sheet o' fire, like the mouth o' a fiery dragon, was rushing and roaring out at the barn-door. I didna ken what to do; I was ready to rush head foremost into the middle o' the flames, as if that I could hae crushed them out wi' the weight o' my body; and I am persuaded that I would hae darted right into the machine loft, where the flames were bursting through the very tiles, as frae the mouth o' a volcano, had not my wife, and our eldest daughter Janet, flewn after me, and held me in their arms, the one crying—'Be calm, William—do naething rashly—let us see to save what can be saved;' and the other saying—'Faither! faither! dinna risk your life.'

"Now, there was a hard frost owre the entire face o' the ground, and there wasna a drop o' water to be got within a quarter o' a mile; and the whole o' my year's crop, with the exception o' what had that day been thrashed, was in the stackyard. I shouted at the pitch o' my voice for assistance, but the devouring flames soon roared louder than I did. Kirsty, wi' her usual presence o' mind, began to clear away the straw from around the barn, to prevent the fire from spreading, and she called upon the bairns and me to follow her example. She also ordered a laddie to set the horses out o' the stables, and the nowt oot o' the 'courtine,' and drive them into a field, where they would be oot o' danger. A' our neighbours round aboot, in a short time arrived to our assistance; but a' our combined efforts were unavailing. The wood wark o' the machine was already on fire—the barn roof fell in, and up flew such a volley o' smoke and firmament o' fire as man had never witnessed. The sparks ascended in millions upon millions; and, as they poured down again like a shower o' fire, every stack that I had broke into a blaze, and the whole produce o' my farm, corn straw and hay became as a burning fiery furnace. It became impossible for ony living thing to remain in the stackyard. From end to end, and round and round, it was one fierce and awful flame, The heat was scorching, and the dense smoke was baith blinding and suffocating. Every person was obliged to flee from it. The very cattle in the field ran about in confusion, and moaned wi' terror, and the horses neighed wi' fright, and pranced to and fro. I stood at a distance, as motionless as a dead man, gazing wi' horror upon the terrific scene o' desolation, beholding the destruction o' my property—the burning up, as I may say, o' a' my prospects. The teeth in my head chattered thegither, and every joint in my body seemed oot o' its socket; and the raging o' destruction in the stackyard was naething to the raging o' misery in my breast; and especially because I coudna banish frae my brain the awfu' thought that the hand o' the wife o' my bosom had lighted the conflagration. While I was standing in this state o' speechless agony, and some around about me were pitying me, while others in whispers said—'He had nae business to get a thrashing machine, and the thing wouldna hae happened.' Kirsty came forward to me, and talkin me by the hand, said—'William, dinna be silly—appear like a man before folk. Our loss is nae doubt great, but in time we may get ower it; and be thankfu' that it is nae waur than it is like to be—for your wife and bairns are spared to ye, and we have escaped unskaithed.'

"'Awa ye descendant o' Judas Iscariot!' cried I; 'dinna speak to me!'

William,' said she, calmly, 'what infatuation possesses ye, man?—dinna mak a fool o' yoursel'.'

'Awa wi' ye!' cried I, perfectly shaking wi' rage.

"Dear me!' I heard a neighbour remark to another; 'how gruffly he speaks to Kirsty! I aye thought that she had the upperhand o' him, but it doesna appear by his manner o' speaking to her.'

"Distracted, wretched, and angry as I was, I experienced a sort o' secret pleasure at hearing the observation. I had shewn them that I wasna a slave tied to my wife's apron-strings, as they supposed me to be. Kirsty left me wi' a look that had baith scorn and pity in it. But oor auldest lassie, my bonny fair-haired Janet—to look upon whose face I always delighted beyond everything on earth—came running forward to me, and throwing her arms about my neck, sobbed wi' her face upon my breast, and softly whispered—'Dinna stand that way, faither, a' body is looking at ye; and dinna speak harshly to my poor mother—she is distressed enough without you being angry wi' her.' I bent my head upon my bairn's shouther, and the tears ran doun my cheeks.

"By this time, everything was oot o' the house; and the fire was prevented frae reaching it, chiefly through the daring exertions o' a hafflins laddie, whose name was James Patrick, who was the son o' a neebor farmer, and who though no aboon seventeen years o' age, I observed was very fond o' oor bonny Janet; for I had often observed the young creatures wandering in the loaning thegither; and when ye mentioned the name o' the ane before the other, the blood rose to their face.

"Next morning, the stackyard, barn, byres, and stables, presented a fearful picture o' devastation. There was naething to be seen but the still smoking heaps o' burnt straw and roofless buildings, wi' wreck and ruin to the richt hand and to the left. Some thought that the calamity would knock me aff my feet, and cause me to become a broken man—and I thought myself that that would be its effect. But Kirsty was determined that we should never sink while we had a finger to wag to keep us aboon the water. Cheap as she had always maintained the house, she now keepit it at almost no expense whatever. For more than two years, nothing was allowed to come into it but what the farm produced, and what we had within ourselves, neither in meat nor in claething.

"But though I witnessed all her exertions, nothing could satisfy my mind that she was not the cause o' the destruction o' the machine, and through it o' all that was in and about the stack yard. The idea haunted me perpetually, and rendered me miserable, and I could not look upon my wife without saying to mysel—'Is it possible that she could hae been guilty o' such folly and great wickedness.' I was the more confirmed in my suspicion, because she never again mentioned the subject o' the machine in my earing, neither would she allow it to be spoken aboot by ony ane else.

"What gratified me maist, during the years that we had to undergo privation, was the cheerfulness wi' which all the bairns submitted to it; and I couldna deny that it was solely to her excellent manner o' bringing them up. Our Janet, who was approaching what may be called womanhood, was now talked o' through the hale countryside for her beauty and sweet temper; and it pleased me to observe, that, during our misfortune, the attentions o' James Patrick (through whose skilful exertions oor house was saved frae the conflagration) increased. It was admitted, on all hands, that a more winsome couple were never seen in Nithsdale.

"Oor auldest son David, who was only fifteen months younger than his sister, had also grown to be o' great assistance to me. Before he was seventeen he was capable o' man's work, which enabled me to do with a hind less than I had formerly employed. My landlord, also, was very considerate; and, the first year after the burning, he gave me back the half o' the rent, which I, with great difficulty, had been able to scrape thegether. But when I went hame, and, in the gladness o' my heart, began to count down the money upon the table before Kirsty and the bairns, and to tell them how good the laird had been—'Tak it up, William!' cried she, 'tak it up, and gang back wi' it—he would consider it an obligation a' the days o' our lives. I will be beholden to neither laird nor lord! nor shall ony ane belonging to me—sae, tak back the money, for it isna ours!'

"'Bless me!' thought I, 'but this is something very remarkable. This is certainly another proof that she really is at the bottom o' the fire-raising. It is the consciousness o' her guilt that makes her shudder at and refuse the kindness o' the laird.

"'It is braw talking, Kirsty,' said I; 'but I see nae necessity for persons that hae been visited wi' a misfortune such as we met wi', and wha hae suffered sae much on account o' it, to let their pride do them an injury or exceed their discretion. Consider that we hae a rising family to provide for.'

"'Consider what ye like,' quoth she, 'but, if ye accept the siller, consider what will be the upshot. Ye would hae to be hat in hand to him at all times and on all occasions. Yer very bairns would be, as it were, his bought slaves. No, William, tak back the money—I order ye!'

"'Ye *order* me!' cried I, 'there's a guid ane!—and where got ye authority to order me. If ye will hae the siller taen back, tak it back yersel.'

"Without saying another word, she absolutely whipped it off the table, every plack and bawbee, into her apron; and, throwing on her rockelay and hood, set aff to the laird's wi' it, where, as I was afterwards given to understand, she threw it down upon his table wi' as little ceremony as she had sweept it aff mine.

"Ye may weel imagine, that baith my astonishment and vexation were very considerable. I had seen a good deal o' Kirsty, but the act o' taking back the siller crowned a'!

"'Losh!' said I, in the pure bitterness o' my spirit, 'that caps a'!—that is even worse than destroying the machine, wi' the stacks and stabling into the bargain!'

"'What do ye mean about destroying the machine, faither?' inquired Janet and David, almost at the same instant—'who do ye say destroyed it?'

"'Naebody,' said I, angrily, 'naebody!'—for I found I had said what I ought not to hae said.

"'Really, faither,' said Janet, 'whatever it may be that ye think and hint at, I am certain that ye do my mother a great injustice if ye harbour a single thought to her prejudice. It may appear rather proud-spirited her tackin back the siller, though I hae nae doubt, in the lang run, but we'll a' approve o' it.'

"'That is exactly what I think, too, said David.

"'Oh, nae dout!' said I, 'nae dout o' that!—for she has ye sae learned, that everything she does, or that ony o ye does, is always right; and whatever I do must be wrang!' and I went out o' the house in a pet, driving the door behind me, and thinking about the machine and the loss o' the siller.

"Hoocever, I am happy to say, that although Kirsty did tak back the money to the laird and leave it wi' him, yet, as I have already hinted to ye, through her frugal management, within a few years we got the better o' the burning. But there is a saying, that some folk are no sooner weel than they're ill again—and I'm sure I may say that at that time. I no sooner got the better o' the effects o' ae calamity, until another owretook me. Ye hae heard what a terrible dirdum the erecting o' toll-bars caused throughout the country, and upon the Borders in particular. Kirsty was one o' those who cried oot most bitterly against them. She threatened, that if it were attempted to place ane within ten miles o' oor farm, she would tear it to pieces with her ain hands.

"'Here's a bonny time o' day, indeed!' said she, 'that a body canna gang for a cart-load o' coals or peats, or tak their corn, or whatever it may be, to the market, but they must pay whatever a set o' Justices o' the Peace please to charge them for the liberty o' driving alang the road. Na, na! the roads did for our faithers before us, and they will do for us. They went alang them free and without payment, and so will we; for I defy any man to claim, what has been a public road for ages, as his property. Only submit to such an imposition, and see what will be the upshot. But, rather than they shall mak sic things in this neighbourhood, I will raise the whole countryside.'

"Unfortunately in this, as in verything else, she verified her words. A toll-bar was erected within half-a-mile o' oor door. Kirsty was clean mad about it. She threatened not only to break the yett to pieces, but to hang the toll-keeper owre the yett-post, if he offered resistance. I thought o' my machine, and said little; and the more especially, because every ane, baith auld and young, and through the whole country, so far as I could hear, were o' the same centiments as Kirsty. There never was onything proposed in this kingdom that was mair unpopular. And, I am free to confess, that, with regard to the injustice o' toll-bars, I was precisely o' the same way o' thinking as my wife—only I by no means wished to carry things to the extremes that she wished to bring them to.

"I ought to tell ye, that our laird was more than suspected o' being the principal cause o' us having a toll-bar placed so near us, so that we could neither go to lime, coals nor market, without gaun through it. I was, therefore, almost glad that my wife had taken back the siller to him, lest—as I was against raising a disturbance about the matter—folk should say, that my hands and tongue were tied wi' the siller which he had given me back; for, if I didna wish to be considered the slave o' my wife, as little did I desire to be thought the tool o' my landlord. But, ae day, I had been in at Dumfries in the month o' July, selling my wool; I had met wi' an excellent market, and a wool-buyer from Leeds and I got very hearty thegether. He had bought from me before; and, on that day, he bought all that I had. I knew him to be an excellent man, though a keen Yorkshireman, and, ye ken, that the Yorkshire folk and we Scotchmen are a gay tight match for ane anither—though I believe, after a', they rather beat us at keeping the grip o' the siller; but as

I intended to say, I treated him, and he treated me, and a very agreeable day we had. I recollect when he was pressing me to hae the other gill, I sang him a bit hamely sang, o my ain composing. Ye shall hear it.

Nay, dinna press, I winna stay,
For drink shall ne'er abuse me;
It's time to rise and gang away—
Sae neibors ye'll excuse me.
It's true I like a social gill,
A friendly crack wi' cronies;
But I like my wifie better still,
Our Jennies an' our Johnnies.
There's something by my ain fireside—
A saft, a haly sweetness;
I see, wi' mair than kingly pride,
My hearth a heaven o' neatness.
Though whisky may gie care the fling,
Its triumph's unco noisy;
A jiffy it may pleasure bring,
But comfort it destroys aye.
But I can view my ain fireside
Wi' a' a faither's rapture;—
Wee Jenny's hand in mine will slide,
While Davy reads his chapter.
I like your company an' your crack;
But there's ane I loo dearer,
Ane wha will sit till I come back
Wi' ne'er a ane to cheer her.
A waff o' joy comes owre her face
The moment that she hears me;
The supper—a' thing's in its place;
An' wi' her smiles she cheers me.

However, I declare to you, it was very near ten o'clock before I left the house we are sitting in at present, and put my foot in the stirrup. But, as my friend Robin says—

'Weel mounted on my grey meer Meg,'

I feared for naething; and, though I had saxteen lang Scots miles to ride, I thought naething about it; for, as he says again—

'Kings may be great, but I was glorious,
Owre a' the ills o' life victorious!'

But, just as I had reached within about half a mile o' the toll-bar that had been erected near my farm, I saw a sort o' light rising frae the ground, and reflected on the sky. My heart sank within me in an instant. I remembered the last time I had seen such a light. I thought o' my burning stackyard, o' my ruined machine, and o' Kirsty! My first impulse was to gallop forward, but a thousand thoughts, a thousand fears came owre me in an instant; and I thought that evil tidings come quick enough o' their ain accord, without galloping to meet them. As I approached the toll-bar, the flame and the reflection grew brighter and brighter; and I heard the sound o' human voices, in loud and discordant clamour. My forebodings told me, to use Kirsty's words, what would be the upshot. I hadna reached within a hundred yards o' the bar, when, aboon a' the shouting and the uproar, I heard her voice, the voice o' my ain wife, crying—

Mak him promise that it shall ne'er be put up again—mak him swear to it—or let his yett gang the gaet o' the toll-yett!'

"In a moment all that I had dreaded I found to be true. At the sound o' her voice, hounding on the enraged multitude, (though I didna altogether disapprove o' what they were doing,) I plunged my spurs into my horse, and galloped into the middle o' the outrageous crowd, crying—'Kirsty! I say, Kirsty awa hame wi' ye! What right or what authority had ye to be there?'

"'Hear him! hear him!' cried the crowd, Willie has turned a toll-bar man, and a laird man, because the laird once offered him the half o' his rent back again! Never mind him, Kirsty!—we'll stand yer friends!'

"'I thank ye, neighbours,' said she, 'but I require naebody to stand as friends between my guidman and me. I ken it is my duty to obey him, that is, when he is himsel, and comes hame at a reasonable time o' nicht; but not when he is in a way that he doesna ken what he's saying, as he is the nicht.'

"'Weel done, Mistress Wastle!' cried a dozen o' them, 'we see ye hae the whip-hand o' him yet!'

"'The mischief tak ye!' cried I, 'for a wheen ill-man nered scoundrels; but I'll let every mother's son and dochter among ye ken whase hand the whip is in!'

"And, wi' that, I began to lay about me on every side; but, before I had brought the whip half-a-dozen o' times round my head, I found that the horse was out from under me; and there was I wi' my back upon the ground, while, on the one side, was a heavy foot upon my breast, and, on the other, Kirsty threatening ony ane that would injure a hair o' her husband's head; and my son David and James Patrick rushing forward, seized the man by the throat that had his foot upon my breast, and, in an instant, they had him lying where I had lain; for they were stout powerfu' lads.

"But when I got upon my feet, and began to recover from the surprise that I had met wi', there did I see the laird himsel, standing trembling like an ash leaf in the middle o' the unruly mob—and, as ringleader o' the whole, my wife Kirsty shaking her hand in his face, and endeavouring to extort from him a promise, that there never should be another toll-bar erected upon his grounds, while he was laird!

"'Kirsty!' I exclaimed, 'what are ye after? Are ye mad?

"'No, William!' cried she, 'I am not mad, but I am standing out for our rights against injustice; and sorry am I to perceive, that at a time when everybody is crying out, and raising their hand against the oppression that is attempted to be practised upon them, my guidman should be the only coward in the countryside.'

"'William Wastle!' said the terrified laird, whom some o' them were handling very roughly, (and principally, I must confess, at the instigation o' Kirsty,) 'I am glad to see that I have one tenant upon my estate who is a true man; and I ask your protection.'

"'Such protection as I can afford, sir,' said I, 'ye shall have; but, after the rough handling which I have experienced this very moment, I dout it is not much that is in my power to afford ye.'

"'Get yer faither awa to his bed, bairns!' cried my wife, as I was driving my way through the crowd to the assistance o' the laird; and I'll declare, if my son David and James Patrick, didna actually come behind me, and, lifting me aff my feet, carried me shouther-high a' the way to my bedroom; and, in spite o' my threats, expostulations, and commands, locked me into it.

"Weel, thought I, as I threw myself down upon the bed without taking aff my claes, (partly because I found my head wanted ballast to tak them aff,) I said unto mysel—'This comes o' having a wise and headstrong wife, and bairns o' her way o' bringing up. But if ever I marry again and hae a family, I shall ken better how to act.'

"Notwithstanding all that I had undergone and witnessed, in the space o ten minutes, I fell fast asleep; and the first thing that I awoke to recollect—that is to be conscious o'—was my daughter Janet rushing to my bedside, and crying—'Faither! faither! my mother is a prisoner!—my poor dear mother, and James Patrick, also!—and I heard the laird saying that they would baith be transported, as the very least that could happen them for last night's work, which I understand will be punished more severely than even highway robbery!'

I awoke like a man born to a consciousness o' horror and o' naething but horror. All that I had seen and heard, and encountered on the night before, was just as a dream to me, but a dismal dream I trow.

"'Where is yer mother?' I gasped, 'or what is it that ye are saying, hinny? and—where is James Patrick?'

"'Oh!' cried my darling daughter, 'before this time they are baith in Dumfries jail, for pu'ing down and burn-

ing the toll-yetts, and threatening the life o' the laird. But everybody says it will gang particularly hard against my mother and poor James; for, though every one was to blame, they were what they ca' ringleaders.'

"I soon recollected enough o' the previous night's proceedings to comprehend what my daughter said. I hurried on my claes, and awa I flew to Dumfries. But I ought to tell ye, that the laird's servants had ridden in every direction for assistance; and having got three or four constables, and about a dozen o' the regular military, all armed wi' swords and pistols, they made poor Kirsty and James Patrick, wi' about a dozen others, prisoners and conveyed them to Dumfries jail.

"When I was shewn into the prison, Kirsty and James, and the whole o' them, were together. 'O Kirsty, woman!' said I, in great distress, 'could ye no hae keepit at hame while my back was turned! Why hae ye brought the like o' this upon us? I'm sure ye kenned better! *Was the destruction o' the machine and the stackyard no a warning to ye!*'

"'William,' answered she, 'what is it that ye mean?—is this a time to cast upon me yer low-minded suspicions? Had ye last nicht acted as a man, we micht hae got the laird to comply wi' our request; but it is through you, and such as you, that everything in this unlucky country is gaun to destruction; and sorry am I to say that ill o' ye—for a kind, a good, and a faithfu' husband hae ye been to me, William.'

"'O sir!' said James Patrick, coming forward and taking me by the hand, 'may I just beg that ye will tak my respects to yer dochter Janet; and, I hope, that whatever may be the issue o' this awkward affair, that she will in no way look down upon me, because I happen to be as a sort o' prisoner in a jail.' My heart rose to my mouth, and I hadna a word to say to either my wife or him.

"'Weel,' said I, as I left them, 'I must do the best I can to bring baith o' ye aff; and, to accomplish it, the best lawyers in a' Scotland shall be employed.'

"But to go on—at a very great expense, I, and the faither o' James Patrick, had employed the very principal advocates that went upon the Dumfries circuit; and they tauld us that we had naething to fear, and that we might keep ourselves quite at ease.

'I was glad that my son David hadna been seized and imprisoned, as weel as his mother and James Patrick, for he also had been ane o' the ringleaders in the breaking doon and burning o' the toll-bars, and in the assault upon the laird. But he escaped apprehension at the time, and I suppose they thought that they had enough in custody to answer the ends o' justice and the law, and, therefore, he was permitted to remain unmolested.

"Now, sir, comes the most melancholy part o' my story. I had a quantity o' wool to deliver to the Yorkshire buyer, I hae already mentioned, upon a certain day. My son David was to drive the carts wi' it to Annan. It was sair wark, and he had but little sleep for a fortnight thegether. It caused him to travel night and day, load after load. Now, I needna tell ye, that at that period the roads were literally bottomless. The horse just went plunge, plunging, and the cart jerking now to ae side and now to another, or giein a shake sufficient to drive the life oot o' ony body that was in it. Now, the one wheel was on a hill, and the other in a hollow; or, again, baith were up to the axle-tree in mud, or the horse half swimming in water! And yet people cried out against toll-bars! But, as I hae been telling ye, my son David had driven wool to Annan for a fortnight, and he was sair worn out. The roads were in a dreadful state—worse than if, now-a-days, ye were to attempt to drive through a bog.

"Ae night, when he was expected hame, his sister Janet and mysel' sat lang up waiting upon him, and wondering what could be keeping him, when a stranger rode up to the door, and asked if 'one Mr William Wastle lived there? I replied 'Yes!' And, Oh! what think ye were his tidings, but that my name had been seen upon the carts, that the horses had stuck fast in the roads, and that my son David, who had fallen from the shafts, had either been killed, or drowned among the horses' feet!

"I thought his brothers and sisters, and especially Janet, would have gane oot o' their judgment. As for me, a' the trials I had had, were but as a drap in the bucket when compared wi' this!

"But, after I had mourned for a night, the worst was to come. Hoo was I to tell his poor imprisoned mother!—imprisoned as she was for opposing the very thing that would hae saved her son's life!

"Next day I went to Dumfries; but I declare that I never saw the light o' the sun hae sic a dismal appearance. The fields appeared to me as if I saw them through a mist. Even distance wasna as it used to be. I was admitted into the prison, but I winna—oh no! I canna repeat to ye the manner in which I communicated the tidings to his mother! It was too much for her then—it would be the same for me now! for naething in the whole coorse o' my life ever shook me so much as the death o' my poor David. But I remember o' saying to her, and I declare to ye upon the word o' a man, unthinkingly—'O Kirsty, woman! had we had toll-bars, David might still hae been living!'

"'William! William!' she cried, and fell upon my neck, 'will ye kill me outright?' And, for the first time in my life, I saw the tears gushing down her cheeks. Those tears washed away the very remembrance o' the machine, and the burning o' the stacks. I pressed her to my heart, and my tears mingled wi' hers.

"I believe it was partly through our laird, that baith Kirsty and James Patrick were liberated without being brought to a trial. Her imprisonment, and the death o' our son, had wrought a great change upon my wife; and I think it was hardly three months after her being set at liberty that we were baith sent for to auld John Neilson the barnman's, whose wife Peggy lay upon her death-bed. When we approached her bedside, she raised herself upon her elbow, and said—'The burning o' yer barn and stackyard has always been a mystery—hear the real truth from the words o' a dying and guilty woman. Yer machine had thrown my husband out o' employment, and when yer wife there gied me back the pipe, a whuff o' which I said would do her good, *I let the burning dottle drap amang the straw*—nane o' ye observed it—ye were a' leaving the barn. Now, ye ken the cause—on my death-bed, I make the confession.'

"I declare I thought my heart would hae louped out o' my body. I pressed my wife, against whom I had harboured such vile suspicions, to my breast. She saw my meaning—she read my feelings.

"'William,' said she, kindly, 'if ye hae onything on yer mind that ye wish to forget, so hae I; let us baith forget and forgie!'

"I felt Kirsty's bosom heaving upon mine, and I was happy.

"Within six months after this, James Patrick and our dochter Janet were married; and an enviable couple they then were, and such they are unto this day. And, as for my Kirsty, auld though she is, and though the sang says—

'I wadna gie a button for her,'

auld, I say, as she is, and wi' a' her faults, I would gie a' the buttons upon my coat for her still, and a' the siller that ever was in my pouch into the bargain."

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE FESTIVAL.

In most of the villages on the southern Border, and particularly in part of Northumberland, together with Norham and Islandshires, there are what are called annual feasts. In the manner in which they are now kept, they resemble the *Wakes* or *Revels* which are held in various parts of England. They were, originally, religious festivals, and are still commemorated upon the anniversary of the Saint to which the church or religious house in the village, or with which it was connected, was, in olden times, dedicated. They have long ago lost their religious character, and joviality has assumed the place of seriousness. Nevertheless. although, for more than a century, these feasts have been attended with much boisterous merriment, there is still much connected with them that we respect and revere. They come, as it were, whispering the good, the godlike admonition of Scripture—"Let brotherly love continue." For, on those days, brethren and the children of a family, meet together from afar, beneath a father's or a brother's roof—the grandsire and the grandson sit at the table together—and the words of the inspired royal bard, that it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity, are exemplified. They are seasons of mutual forgiveness, and of the exchange of family love. They are also seasons for which many a parent's heart longs eagerly; and, although they are what may be termed changeable feasts, they fall on days which they all know without the aid of an almanack; for there is no calendar so true as a father's or a mother's heart. They are days to which many a mother looks forward, as to the time when she shall press an absent son or daughter to her bosom—when a father shall give them the right hand of welcome, and in the fulness of his joy press his teeth upon his lip, to conceal his emotion, while a stranger tear steals out, and seeks a home upon his cheek. They are, in every house, days in which the "fatted calf" is killed; and each village or feast has its own particular dainty, according to the season. At one is the luscious grilse (on that occasion baked instead of boiled;) at another, dishes of fruit; and at a third, the roast goose. But each feast has its particular viands; and of them the poorest make an effort to partake. They are not as the Christmas feast was of old, when the rich fed the poor and their dependants at their table, and regaled each with "a smack of the good black jack;" but they are days on which the very poorest strive to make a feast for themselves and to see *their own* around their humble board.

We confess, however, that these feasts do not present sunny pictures exclusively; there are many who, as we have hinted, crown them with boisterous merriment. It was an ancient custom to elect, on the morning after the feast, a *Mayor*, or *Lord of the Festival*, whose word was law, and who was the sovereign dispenser of fun and frolic, and against whose command there was no appeal. The farce of "*The Mayor of Garret*" furnishes a correct example of this species of rustic revelry. We are not yet very old; but are old enough to remember the time when the mayor, or lord of the festivities referred to, was chosen in accordance with the words of Burns—

> "Wha first beside his chair shall fa',
> Let him be king amang us a'!"

But it is long since the treatment of a master of the revels ceased even to be decent—we would say merciful. In most places, he is no longer paraded as an absolute monarch upon the shoulders of his subjects, but as the slave of the multitude, of whom they delight to make pastime. The mayor of the village feast, "has fallen from his high estate," of dictating imperious commands for his short hour of power and now he is generally placed in the condition of the frog in the fable, and what may be sport to his tormentors is well nigh death to him.

The festival from which our present story takes its rise was held in Tweedmouth, (the southern suburb of Berwick,) nearly seventy years ago; and, according to custom, on Margaret's day, or the following Monday. For, although most of them are in some degree held upon the Sunday (a celebration which would "be more honoured in the breach than in the observance,") Monday may always be considered as the chief day of the feast. Now, at that period, there resided at Tweedmouth, a Mrs Mordington, the widow of the commander of a coasting sloop, who had left her with two children, a son and daughter. The son, at the period our tale begins, was about one-and-twenty; his sister two years younger. The son's name was George, and he was then a clerk in the office of a merchant in Gateshead. At the feast of St Margaret's, therefore, which is commemorated in Tweedmouth in July, when the sun is in the plenitude of its strength, and when the very birds, oppressed with its heat, leave the thin air and the upper branches, and, folding their wings, sit silently in the umbrageous shades, enjoying, well pleased, the coolness of their leafy shelter—George Mordington returned to Tweedside, to see his mother and his sister; yea, and there was another whom he longed not less eagerly to behold, and that was Marion Weatherly, a fair-headed maiden of nineteen, and the daughter of a master fisherman, who had the lease of some two hundred yards upon the Tweed somewhere between where

the Whitadder joins it and the bridge; but whether on the south or north side I cannot tell. As there may be thousands of the readers of these tales unacquainted with the nature of salmon fisheries, or of what is meant by having been a master fisherman in those days, I shall simply state that Mr Weatherly had taken a lease of a particular spot on one side of the Tweed, and which was in length about two hundred yards, and on that space he had the right of casting out and dragging in his nets. He held this river-farm at a very small sum annually; though, within a mile from the spot where he held it, we have known a lesser portion of fishing-right in the river let for nearly two thousand pounds sterling per annum; and that, too, when the wisdom of the present generation (perhaps I ought to put the generation in the past tense) almost threw a *dike* across the mouth of the river, which built up what was called the *Meadow Haven*, and which haven was a gut in the rocks, by which the fish, coming in shoals from the north, entered the river; and this being built up by the *dike* or *pier* aforesaid, after running their noses against a stone wall, instead of meeting with the *natural* entrance to the river which *nature* dictated to them to pursue, they were left, like a pack of fox-hounds that had been thrown off their scent, to seek the artificial entrance where they might find it, or for another river if they chose. Thus, the good old Tweed being half blocked up, fishing waters, in the present day, do not abound with the silver-mailed salmon, as they did in the days of Mr Weatherly. Besides, the river was then *fished*, not *harried!* It is not, therefore, wonderful, that the father of Marion became a man of property.

Now, George Mordington and Marion Weatherly had known each other from childhood. I do not say that they had loved each other from that period; but they were at the same school together, and even before they left it, they were *equalled* to each other. This *equalling*, or, as it is sometimes called, *evening* to each other, by schoolmates or acquaintances, often goes far towards producing the wedded love of riper years. Many a match would never have been made, but for the schoolboy's or the comrade's jeer. Once name young hearts in the same breath, and you draw a magic circle round them; and, however little they may be acquainted with each other, whoever of the two may break through that circle, strikes a passing pang into the bosom of the other. Pride feels wounded, if nothing else did; but there is a feeling deeper and more tender than pride that has been rudely touched. It does not last long; but it is keen while it lasts. I am perfectly aware that there are many who may say—"Pshaw! it is all nonsense; who cares anything about these things *now?*" No middle-aged person, I grant you. Individuals of such an age like some home truth—something that comes home to their business and their bosoms as they are; and when such a thing meets them they say—"Oh, it is very natural." Granted that *it* is natural, why should people of middle age, yea, or of grey hairs, forget that they were once young; and that what is now "stale, flat, and unprofitable" to them, is still the feelings of thousands—is still delightful to thousands—was once *their* feelings, and delightful to *them!* Though past the sunny heyday ourselves, we like not to hear either man or woman cry out, with the preacher, "all is vanity!" For light is beautiful—so is the sun that sheds it forth. The fair earth with its buds, its flowers, its leaves, its fruits, and its trees with their singing birds—they are all beautiful—exquisitely beautiful! No man can look upon the works of his Maker, without adoring, worshipping, and loving the Power that formed them. Oh, when we so look abroad upon the glorious creation that is above, beneath, and around us—when we see so much that is measureless, magnificent, and that steals forth in beauty as a bud opens, until its loveliness is revealed before the very soul; and, above all, when we think also of the kind hearts that share our sorrows and our joys, that watch over us and that throb for us, that mourn with us and rejoice with us, and that are one with us in all things—we are tempted to say that all is "not vanity," but that man is the author of his own "vexation of spirit." Now, George Mordington was one who loved all the works of nature for their loveliness. He saw nothing to which his young heart would respond—"it is vanity!" He loved the very worm that crawled, writhing and dying as it crawled, over his path, and pushed it gently with his foot upon its paren earth, that it might live. There was nothing in the scener of his nativity that he should admire it; there was neithe the sublimity of mountains to awe him into remembrance—the majesty of wooded hills, (which there might be,) nor lakes, where echoes died in music; but there was the Tweed, the stream of his nativity, which rushes into the arms of the ocean, like a beautiful bride that has been cast off by her parent, and falls upon the neck of her lover without adornments; and there was the rich lands of the Merse and Islandshire, for ever spread out before him, with the everlasting ocean, its calms and its storms, its placid stillness and its terrible waves—forming together a scene such as he that has once looked upon can never forget. Through such scenes George Mordington recollected Marion Weatherly.

It has been mentioned that he was a clerk in Gateshead, and, at the annual festival held in Tweedmouth, he went to visit his mother, his sister, and the fair Marion. I might—for I have often been a witness of such a scene—describe the joy of the doting mother as she beheld her son, in the youthful bloom of manhood, seated at her table. With delight sparkling in her eyes, she sat gazing on his face, until the tear of affection rose and bedimmed their radiance. On her left hand sat her son, and on her right her daughter and her intended daughter—Marion Weatherly. Their dinner passed over in happiness—the mother smiled to look upon her children's joy; and when "a gentle tap came to the door," which the daughter best understood, and, blushing, responded to it, George and Marion also arose, and they went into the fields together. They wandered to and fro in a narrow pathway, the length of which was rather less than a mile, while, on each side of them, the ripening grain formed a *waving wall*, giving promise of an abundant harvest. They wandered backward and forward, hand locked in hand, until the sun was lost behind Hallidon, and the stars began to steal out through the grey twilight.

When they shook hands at parting—"Now, George," said Marion, "you have your acquaintances to see, but do not remain late with them; for my sake, and your mother's do not."

"Dear Marion," said he, "wherefore remind me of this? I know that I must meet my acquaintances to-night, all of whom are my old friends, many of them my school-fellows; I have promised to meet them—I have to leave for Newcastle to-morrow—and wherefore remind me that I should not remain late with them?"

"Oh!" she replied, "only that you will remember your character, George."

"Do not be interested about my character," said he; "I have hitherto supported it with credit to myself, and, I think, dear Marion, I may do so also for the future."

He pressed his lips to hers, and, shaking her hand fervidly, they parted for the night; but, before they parted, they had renewed their young vows, beneath an ash tree, where they had sat down together, (upon the foot-path which is now known by the name of the "*Willow Back*,") and where he had carved their names four years before, and there he deepened the incision which recorded their initials; and, as Virgil somewhere hath it, (though neither of them knew any thing about Virgil,) they vowed that, as the "bark expanded, their love would grow." This is a very common idea amongst love-engravers upon trees; but, though a Mantuan swain might so write, a British peasant would fre-

quently have cause to say, that, as the tree grew, and the bark expanded, so did his initials spread, and become vague, and more vague, until fog grew over them; and upon the heart, as on the tree where he had first carved his name, there was no trace left.

But George Mordington parted with Marion, and went to a street called the Kiln Hill, in which there then was an inn, known by the name of "THE SALMON." In it all the associates of his youth were assembled; and when he entered they rose simultaneously, each offering his hand, and exclaiming—"Ah! George! my dear fellow, how are you?"

They sat long, and they drank deeply; and, while the song, the story, the jest, or the argument went round, they forgot how time and reason were flying together. It was usual for such companies not to break up until they had witnessed the election of the Mayor. The heads of several of the party began to go round as well as the glass; and of this number was George Mordington. He was a youth of the most sober and temperate habits; and before he had drank off his third glass, he might have said, in the words of the song—"This is no me!" His very countenance was changed; his manner, which was, in general, backward and retiring, became bold and boisterous. Instead of his wonted silence, he was the chief orator of the company. He spoke of things of which he ought not to have spoken, and as glass succeeded glass, so did one act of folly succeed another. Some of the more sober of the company said, they "were sorry for poor Mordington—but his head could stand nothing; and," added they, "it is a pity, for he is an excellent fellow." This, however, was only the sentiment of a part of them; and, as he began to exhibit fantastic tricks, and to declaim with violent gestures upon all subjects, some said that he would make an excellent *Mayor*, and proposed that a cart should be procured. Against this proposal some of his acquaintances protested; but the idea pleased his own disordered fancy, and as the madness of intoxication increased, he insisted that the bacchanalian honour should be conferred upon him.

"Well done, George!" cried the more thoughtless of the party; "he is the king of good fellows, every inch of him!"

So saying, they rushed into the street, bearing him upon their shoulders; and amidst the shouts and laughter of men and boys, he was placed in a cart, his face rubbed over with soot, his hair bedaubed with flour, and a broomstick was placed in his hand as his rod of office.

"Hurra! George Mordington is Mayor!" was the cry upon the streets; and followed by a noisy multitude, he was paraded round the village, and, in conformity with ancient custom, delivered a speech at every public-house and baker's door in the place.

Old and young leave their pillows, to "see the Mayor;" as they term it, and hasten to the door or window, to witness his procession as he is hurled along. There were many, who, as they perceived him, expressed regret to see George Mordington in such a situation, and said it would break his mother's heart.

But, as they passed the door of Mr Weatherly, a sudden cry was heard. It was a woman's scream of agony; and as it burst forth, the maddened shout of the multitude was hushed. It struck upon the ear of George Mordington in the midst of his madness and degradation—it entered his heart. It was the cry of his betrothed Marion. He struck his hand upon his brow, and fell back in the cart as if an arrow had entered his breast. Her voice had startled him, as from a trance, into a consciousness of his shame and folly.

"He is dead!" cried the crowd—for he fell as if dead, and in a state of unconsciousness he was conveyed to his mother's house. The poor widow wept as she beheld her joy turned into shame; and as he opened his eyes and began to gaze vacantly around, his sister said unto him, but rather sorrowfully than reproachfully—"Brother! brother! who could have thought that you would have been guilty of this?"

A groan of anguish was his only reply.

"Daughter," said his mother, "do not upbraid him; he will feel anguish enough for the shame he has brought upon himself and on us, without our reproaches."

He started to his feet as he heard her voice, he thrust his fingers in his hair, he gnashed his teeth together, and howling, as one in a paroxysm of insanity, exclaimed—"What have I done! I am lost—disgraced for ever!"

"No, my son! no!" said his mother; "you have acted foolishly—very foolishly; but, in time it will be forgotten."

"Never! never!" he answered; "would that the earth would swallow me up! I am worse than a madman or a villain—I am ashamed of my existence!"

They endeavoured to soothe him; and, for a few hours, he forgot his shame in sleep—though not wholly, for his slumber was troubled, and in the midst of it he groaned, clenched his hands, and grated his teeth together. The remembrance of his folly was stronger than sleep. He awoke, and a sensation of horror awoke with him. The extravagance and the madness of which he had been guilty in the morning were, at first, only remembered as a disagreeable and confused dream, which he wished to chase from his thoughts, and was afraid to remember more vividly. But, as he saw the tears on the cheeks of his mother and his sister, as they sat weeping by his bedside, all the absurdities in which he had been an actor, rushed painfully, if not distinctly, across his memory; and he covered his face with his hands, ashamed to look upon the light, or on his kindred's face. He was sick and fevered, and his throat was parched, yet the sense of shame lay on his heart so keenly, that he would not ask for a drop of water to cool his tongue. For five days he was confined to his bed; and the physician who had been called in to attend him, dreaded an attack of brain fever. It was ordered that he should be kept calm; but there was a troubled fire in his breast that burned and denied him rest. On the sixth day, he ventured to whisper something in his sister's ear regarding Marion.

"Poor Marion!" she replied, "though she forgives you, her father forbids her to speak to you again, and has sent her to the north of Scotland, that she may not have an opportunity of seeing you."

He sat in agony and in silence for a few moments, and rising and taking his hat, walked feebly towards the door But, ere he had opened it, he turned back, and throwing himself upon his seat, cried—"I am ashamed for the sunlight to fall upon my face, or for the eyes of any one that I know, to look upon me."

When the sun had set, and night began to fall grey upon the river, he again rose, and went towards the house of Marion's father.

"What want ye?" said the old man angrily, as he entered; "away, ye disgrace o' kith and kin, and dinna let the shamefu' shadow o' sic a ne'er-do-weel darken my door! Away wi' ye! Dinna come here—and let ae telling be as good as a hundred—for daughter o' mine shall never speak to ye again!"

"You will not," said George, "deal with me so harshly, because I have been guilty of one act of folly. They have a steady foot who never make a slip; and, ashamed as I am of my conduct, it certainly has not been so disgraceful as never to be forgiven."

"I have told ye once, and I tell ye again," cried the old man more wrathfully, "that my daughter shanna speak to ye while she breathes. I hope she has a spirit above it. It would be a fine story for folk to talk about, that she had married a blackguard that was Mayor at Tweedmouth feast!"

"I deserve your censure;" returned George; "but, surely there is nothing so heinous in what I have done, as to merit

the epithet you apply to me. I acknowledge, and am ashamed of my folly; what can I do more? and I have also suffered for it."

"Ye acknowledge your folly!" exclaimed the fisherman; "pray, sir, how could ye deny it? I saw it—the whole town saw it—my poor daughter was a witness o' it; and yet ye have the impudence to stand there before me and say ye acknowledge it. And meikle mends it makes to say ye are sorry for it. I suppose, sir, the very murderer is sorry for his crime when he stands condemned before the judge; but his sorrow, I reckon, is but a poor reason why he should be pardoned! Away wi' ye, I say!—ye shall find no admission here. At ony rate, I have taken good care to have my silly bairn out o' yer reach, and that she may be out o' the way o' the disgrace and the scandal that ye have brought upon us." So saying, the speaker rudely closed the door in the face of his visiter.

George Mordington returned to his mother's house, gliding silently, as a ghost is said to move; for his cheek burned lest any one should look upon his face. On the following day, he prepared to set out for Gateshead; but, before he went, he placed the following letter, addressed to Marion Weatherly, into the hands of his sister, and which she was to give to her on her return:—

"Marion—I cannot now call you *my* Marion—I have disgraced you, I have dishonoured myself. Your advice, which I deemed unnecessary, was not only forgotten, but you know how it was insulted. I know you must despise me; and I blame you not—you have a right to do so. I have made myself contemptible in your eyes, but not more contemptible than my conduct has rendered me in my own. I blush to think of you, and your excellence renders my folly more despicable Call it madness—call it what you will—for it was the infatuation, the frenzy, the insanity of an hour. Yet, dear Marion, by all the hours and scenes of happiness that are gone by, all that we have known together, and that we might yet know, cast me not off for ever! Had I been familiar with the nightly debauch, my degradation would have been less, my conduct not so extravagant. Think of me as one degraded by folly, but not abandoned to it. I have sinned—and that deeply; but my repentance is as bitter as my crime was ridiculous. Its remembrance chokes me. *Forgive me, Marion.* I write the words, but I could not utter them, for I find that I could not stand in your presence, and support the weight of the debasement which presses upon me as a galling load. Your father has treated me cruelly—I would say that he has insulted me, if it were possible to insult one who has so insulted himself. The only apology I can, or should offer for the part I have acted, ought to be, and must be, found in my future conduct. It is on this ground only that I ask and hope for your forgiveness."

So ran his letter; and having delivered it to his sister, under the promise that it should be given to Marion immediately on her return, he left his mother's house, and took his journey towards Gateshead.

On arriving at the office of his employers, they looked upon him as though they knew him not, and he perceived that the place at the desk, which he had formerly occupied, was filled by another; for there the tale of his follies had already reached: so true is it, that evil rideth upon wings which outstrip the wind. His late master sent one of the junior clerks to inform him that he had no farther occasion for his services. George stood as if a thunderbolt had smitten him; and he went forth disconsolate, and began to wander towards the South Shields, while the thought haunted him what he should do, and to whom he should apply for assistance. He had ruined his character—he was without friends, almost without money, and he wandered in wretchness, the martyr of his own folly. He thought of his mother, of his sister, and of the fair Marion, and wept; for, he not only had drawn down misery upon his own head but he had made them miserable also. He took up his lodgings in a mean public-house, by the side of the river, and went round the public offices in Newcastle and Shields, seeking for employment, but without success. In all of them he was known; in each, the tale of his indiscretion seemed to have been heard, for his entrance was greeted with a smile. In a short time, he began to be in want; and, like the prodigal, he would have "arisen and gone unto his father"—but he had no father's roof to receive him—no home, save the lowly habitation of his widowed mother—and he found himself left as an outcast on the earth In his despair he applied to the captain of a vessel which was about to sail for America. During his father's lifetime, he had made some voyages with him, and obtained a knowledge of a seaman's duty. The skipper of the American trader also, to whom he applied, having known him when a clerk in the merchant's office at Gateshead, agreed to take him on board, and give him, as he called it, a trial. George Mordington, accordingly, sailed for America, and several years passed and his mother heard nothing concerning him. The letter which he had left with his sister for Marion, had been delivered to her, and as she read it she wept, and her heart whispered forgiveness. But days, months, and years dragged their slow course along, and no one heard tidings of him. She began to feel that, although she had forgiven him, he had forgotten her. Her father said, she "was weel quit o' the neer-do-weel—that he had always determined that he should not speak to her again, and he was glad that he had not attempted it."

But his poor mother mourned for him as a stricken dove that is robbed of its young; the tears fell upon her pillow a midnight, as she wept for her son, her only son, the child of her heart and hopes. Anxious and fruitless were her inquiries after him. As the mist of morning vanisheth, so had he departed from her sight; and, like it, when the sun melteth it away, he was not.

Mrs Mordington had a brother who had been many years in India, and having returned to Britain, he took up his residence in Ayrshire. Being a widower, and without children, he sent for his sister and her daughter to reside with him. They remained as the inmates of his roof for more than ten years, and during that period she heard nothing of her lost son. But her brother, who was now an old man, died, leaving to her his property; and, regarding the place where her husband's bones lay as her home, she returned to Tweedmouth. There, however, she had not been long, when disease fell, as a withering blight, on the cheeks of her remaining child. Year followed year, and, as the leaves dropped from the trees, her daughter seemed ready to drop into the grave. Over her face, consumption's fitful rainbow spread its beautiful but deadly streaks; and, though the widow now possessed affluence, she knew not happiness. Her son was not, and her fair daughter was withering before her, as a flower on which the cankerworm had fixed its teeth. Yet, long the maiden lingered, until her aged mother almost hoped that they would go down unto the grave together.

Eighteen years had passed since the festival which had proved fatal to the early promise and the fond prospects of George Mordington. Margaret's day had again come round, and the neighbours of the widow, with their children and friends around them, held a holiday. A slow and unwieldy vehicle, which was then the only land conveyance between Berwick and London, stopped in the village. A sun-burnt stranger alighted from it, and as he left the coach, a young maiden crossed his path. She seemed to be seventeen or eighteen years of age, and was dressed in a mourning-gown, with a white sarcenet hood over her head, being in the dress of one who was inviting guests to a funeral.

"Maiden," said the stranger, accosting her "can you inform me where Mrs Mordington resides?"

"Yes, sir, she replied; "I am bidding for the funeral."

"For what funeral?" he exclaimed, eagerly.

"For her daughter's, sir," answered the maiden.

"My sister! my poor sister!" cried the stranger, clasping his hands together.

"Your sister!" said she, inquiringly, gazing in his face, and throwing back her hood as she spoke.

"Heaven!" he exclaimed, and starting back—"your name, maiden! your name!" But he added, "I need not ask it; it is written on your features—your mother's name is Marion."

"It is," replied the astonished and half terrified girl.

"Shew me to my mother's!" he cried, smiting his hand suddenly on his bosom; "would that I had this day to be buried in the grave prepared for my sister!"

Afraid to cast upon him another glance, she conducted him to the house.

"It is here, sir," said she, pointing to the house.

His frame, his features were convulsed; they shook with agitation. He raised his hand and struck upon the door—it was opened by a woman dressed in the garb of mourning, and whose years might be described as being between youth and middle age.

"Do I dream!" he exclaimed, starting back as he beheld her—"I am punished! Yes, I am now punished beyond the measure of my crime! Marion, I am George Mordington!"

She clasped her hands together, a wild shriek escaped her lips, and she fell back as dead upon the floor. Others who sat with the corpse ran to her assistance; but his voice had reached an ear where its tones had lived as a memory that might never die.

"My son! my son!" cried the aged widow, and pressed forward to throw her arms around his neck.

"My mother!" he cried, springing from the ground where he had sunk by the side of Marion.

The widow fell upon the breast of her son, and he wept aloud upon her neck.

Strangers raised Marion and conveyed her from the house. She had long believed George Mordington, the object of her early affections, was with the dead; and, under this conviction, and in obedience to her father's command, she had given her hand to another. The maiden whom the betrothed husband of her youth had met on alighting from the coach was her daughter, and the features of the girl then were as the mother's had been when they last parted.

George Mordington accompanied his sister's corpse, as chief mourner, to the grave. The friends of his boyhood had forgotten the tale of his folly; but its consequences gnawed with fiercer agony in his heart, than when he was first ashamed to behold his own face in a glass because of it. On the following day, it was stated that Marion was not expected to live, and she requested to speak with him before she died. He approached her bedside—she stretched her hand towards him. "Forgive me, George," she cried; "I knew not that you yet lived. I am the wife of one who has long deserted me—my heart has long been broken, and your appearance has severed the last cord that linked me with existence. But I leave behind me a daughter; when I am gone there will be no parent to provide for her, no father whose roof will shelter or hand defend her. As you once loved me, protect my poor child."

"I will! I will!" he exclaimed. "Farewell, Marion!" And he rushed from the house.

She lingered for a few weeks, and he followed her to the grave, as he had done his sister. Yet the remembrance of his early shame still haunted him, and he imagined that every eye in the place of his birth looked on him with derision. He gave his mother's furniture in presents to her neighbours; and with her and the daughter of Marion, proceeded to London. The widow lived for a few years, and at her death, he bequeathed, upon the daughter of his adoption, all that his mother possessed.

"Maiden," he said, "I cannot look upon thy face, but it reminds me of the happiness I have lost, of the misery I have brought on myself and upon others. Child of my Marion, farewell! I leave you, if not rich, above want; be virtuous as your mother was." And, again crying, "Farewell!" he left her; and George Mordington was no more heard of by any who had known him. But, after the lapse of many years, there appeared, in an American newspaper, the following paragraph:—

"Died, at Washington, in the 70th year of his age, George Mordington, Esq. a native of Berwick-upon-Tweed, a patriotic senator, and an upright judge."

POLWARTH ON THE GREEN.

PERADVENTURE there are few of our readers who have not heard of "Polwarth on the Green," and the "Polwarth Thorn." The song bearing the former title is certainly founded upon one of the most popular traditions on the Borders. Since the commencement of this publication, we have been many times requested to write a tale upon the subject, and not less than thrice from different quarters within the last seven days; and, as we are at all times anxious to meet the wishes of our readers, we shall now endeavour to fulfil the request which has been made to us.

There are none to whom the traditions of other days are not interesting. They save from oblivion the memory, the deeds, and the manners of our fathers. No nation is so sunk in barbarity as to disregard them; the civilized European, and the Indian savage, alike cherish them; and the poets of every land have wed them with song. Yet, nowhere are traditions more general or more interesting than upon the Borders. Every grey ruin has its tale of wonder and of war. The solitary cairn on the hillside, speaks of one who died for religion, or for liberty, or belike for both. The very schoolboy passes it with reverence, and can tell the history of him whose memory it perpetuates. The hill on which it stands is a monument of daring deeds, where the sword was raised against oppression, and where heroes sleep. Every castle hath its legends, its tales of terror and of blood, "of goblin, ghost, or fairy." The mountain glen, too, hath its records of love and war—there history has let fall its romantic fragments, and the hills enclose them. The forest trees whisper of the past; and, beneath the shadow of their branches, the silent spirit of other years seems to sleep. The ancient cottage, also, hath its traditions, and recounts

"The short and simple annals of the poor."

Every family hath its legends, which record to posterity the actions of their ancestors, when the sword was law, and even the payment of rent upon the Borders was a thing which no man understood; but, as Sir Walter Scott saith, "all that the landlord could gain from those residing upon his estate, was their personal service in battle, their assistance in labouring the land retained in his natural possession, some petty quit-rents of a nature resembling the feudal casualities, and perhaps a share in the spoil which they acquired by rapine." Many of those traditions are calculated to melt the maiden's heart, to fill age with enthusiasm, and youth with love of country.—But to our story.

In the year 1470, John Sinclair of Herdmanstone, in East Lothian, who was also Lord of Kimmerghame and Polwarth, dying without male issue, the estate of Kimmerghame descended to his daughter Marion, and that of Polwarth to her sister Margaret. His heir-male was his brother Sir William Sinclair, to whom the estate of Herdman-

stone fell. Sir William, as the uncle of the co-heiresses, though not appointed as their guardian by their father, for they were both well nigh of woman's estate when he died, craftily took upon himself that duty. He whispered to them that their estates were not managed as they ought to be—that their bondmen did not perform the duty required of them—that those they had set over their grounds as stewards, did not render them a faithful account of their stewardship. He insinuated a thousand suspicions into their young minds, until their affairs gradually fell into his hands, and he at length succeeded in gaining the entire management of their estates; and he now required only to have the disposal of their personal freedom. Men of power in those days were not very scrupulous as to the means which they employed to obtain their object; he who had a score of retainers, weighed the scales of life and death in his hands. Nevertheless, aware of the rank which his nieces held in the estimation of his country, Sir William knew that it would not be safe to venture upon making them prisoners by open violence. He, therefore, courteously invited them to his house at Herdmanstone, where he stated that the gayest and the proudest company in broad Scotland would be present to delight them. Marion, who was fond of amusements, was overjoyed at the invitation; but her sister Margaret, who was of a graver disposition, said—

"Well, sister, I like not our uncle's kindness—something sinful seems to laugh in his looks; the very movement of his lips bespeaks more than it reveals; confide in *me*, dear sister, and distrust *him*. When I was but a child, playing around our mother's knee, I have heard her say unto my father—'Ah, John! I like not your brother; there is a cunning in his looks, in his very words; he cannot meet you with the straightforward gaze of an honest man; and methinks he looks upon me as though he distrusted and hated me; yea, I have often thought as though he were plotting evil against me.' So our mother was wont to say; and my father would reply—'Dear Elizabeth, think not so cruelly of one who is so near and dear to me; trust me, that he loves you and yours.' 'It may be so,' she would reply, 'but there is that in his manner which I cannot overcome.' Then our father would remain silent for a time, and add—'Well, there is a want of frankness in Sir William which becomes not a brother."

"Lull your suspicions, my demure sister," the light-hearted Marion replied; "a thousand times have I heard nim say that no one but the boldest baron in all Scotland should wed his niece, Marion."

"And he said truly," replied Margaret; "for, if he have us once within his power, not even the boldest knight in Scotland will be able to receive our hands, unless he sue for it with gallant bowmen at his back, and the unsheathed sword to enforce his suit."

"Oh, then, sister," subjoined Marion, "I suppose you have a knight at hand who would delight in such handy-work; for is not Sir Patrick Hume of Wedderburn reputed to be the most valorous knight upon the Borders, and withal the humble worshipper of fair Margaret Sinclair of Polwarth."

And as the maiden spoke she laughed, and tapped her sister good-naturedly upon the cheek. Margaret blushed, and playfully replied—"Well, sister, is there no valorous knight at Wedderburn but Sir Patrick? What think ye of George Hume?"

"No more of this," cried Marion; "let us accept our uncle's invitation, and mingle with the gay company he has invited to meet us."

"If you will have it so, let it be so," replied Margaret; "but, trust me, I fear that good will not come of it."

On the following day they set out upon their journey towards Herdmanstone, accompanied with only two men-servants. Their uncle received them with a shew of cordial friendship; but the guests whom they expected to meet, they saw not, and they had been but a few minutes beneath his roof, when they found themselves prisoners, secured by gratings, bolts, and bars. On discovering the situation into which they had been entrapped, Marion wept aloud, and accused herself of being the unwitting author of her sister's captivity.

"Fear not," said Margaret; "our uncle is a stern man he is a man of blood; but there are as strong hands as his, that will be raised to deliver the sisters of Kinmerghame and Polwarth, when their captivity becomes known."

"But how will it be known?" asked Marion; "for who knows that we are here?"

"Let us trust to Him who is the orphan's father," replied her sister, "and leave all to His good providence."

"Amen," said the other; but she sobbed bitterly as she spoke.

O the second day of their imprisonment, their uncle entered the apartment where they were confined.

"Weel, maidens," said he sternly, "how like ye your abode at Herdmanstone? I have observed the slightfu' een with which baith o' you have looked upon your uncle; and now that ye are in my power, ye shall repent the airs o disdain that ye hae taken upon you. It becomes nae the blood o' Polwarths to assume a superiority over the house o' Sinclair. So choose ye—there are twa cousins who are not very auld, but they're growing; ye shall hae your choice to marry them, or the deepest dungeon in Herdmanstone shall be your doom. Your destiny is placed in your own hands—decide it as ye will; but remember that it is a Sinclair that never broke his word, that wags the finger o' fate over your heads. Eight days! eight days! remember!" he repeated, and left them.

"Now, you will despise me, Margaret," said Marion, "for my maiden ambition has led us into this trouble; yet will I rather be an inmate in our uncle's dungeon, than be the wife of the boy-husband he would assign me. Sister, will you not upbraid me?"

"Upbraid you!" said the calm and gentle Margaret, "stern as is our uncle, deadly as is his wrath, I fear him not. The other day you spoke to me jeeringly of Sir Patrick Home—in the same strain I answered you respecting his brother George. Eight days will not pass until Sir Patrick miss me from Polwarth, and powerful as my uncle may be, bold and desperate as he is, I know that one stone of Herdmanstone Castle will not be left standing upon another till we are freed."

'You have a brave heart, sister," said Marion, but it is small comfort to me, who must look upon myself as the author of this disaster. And how think ye that Sir Patrick or his brother George (if ye will speak o' him) are to hear of our confinement? Wot ye not, that they know not where we are; or if they should know, they will not apprehend that evil could befal us in the house of our relative?"

"I believe, Marion," answered Margaret, "that within the eight days which our uncle has named, we shall either be at liberty, or have ceased to live. It is our lives that he seeks, not that we should be the wives of his sons; rather than be so wed, I will die—so will you. But, if we should die, our deaths would not be unavenged. He would neither enjoy our estates, nor the triumph of his guilt. Ye have heard the names of Patrick and George Hume of Wedderburn spoken of as sounds of terror upon the Borders—their swords have avenged the injured, and released the captive. Marion! they will avenge our wrongs—dear sister, be not afraid."

It was about daybreak on the fourth day after their imprisonment, that a musician, who played upon the Union or Northumbrian pipe of those days, approached beneath the window of their apartment, and softly playing on air, accompanied it with his voice, as follows:—

My heart is divided between them,
I dinna ken which I wad hae;
Right willing my heart I wad gien them—
But how can I gie it to twae?
There's Meggy, a fairer or better
I'm certain there couldna weel be;
Dumfounder'd the first time I met her,
What was sweet Marion to me!

Yet Marion is gentle and bonny
I liked her ere Meggy I saw,
And they say it is sinfu' for ony
Man upon earth to like twa.
My heart it is rugg'd and tormented,
I'd live wi' or die for them baith;
I've done what I've often repented,
To baith I have plighted my aith.

And oft when I'm walking with Meggy,
I'll say "Dear Marion," and start;
While fearfu' she'll say, "Weel, I ken ye
Hae ithers mair dear to your heart."
Was ever a man sae confounded?
I dinna ken what will be dune,
Baith sides o' my bosom are wounded,
And they'll beithe death o' me sune.

Hark!" said Marion, as she listened to the strain of the Minstrel; "it is the song of the Egyptian thief, Johnny Faa. Mind ye since he sang it beneath our window at Kimmerghime?"

I remember it weel," replied Margaret; "but dinna call him thief, sister; for, be Johnny a king or no a king, he is one that King James is glad to lift his bonnet to; and I and sure that he means weel to us at present. Wheesht ye, Marion, and I will whisper to him a low chaunt over the window." And, in a low voice, she sung—

Oh, saw ye my laddie comin, Johnny?
Oh, saw ye my laddie comin'?
If ye've no seen him, tell him frae me,
That I'm a woefu woman.
We here are sisters twa, Johnny,
Confined within this tower;
And ilka time the sun gaes down
It points to our death hour.

'I heard it rumoured, gentle maiden," said the gipsy, gazing eagerly towards the window from whence they looked, "that no good was intended ye in this place; and though it be not in the power of Johnny Faa to bring to ye the assistance of his own men, yet it strikes me there is *ane*, if no *twa*, maidens, that I could bring to your rescue, and that wad make a clap o' thunder wring through the deepest cell in Herdmanstone."

"Thank ye, Johnny," replied Margaret; "ye're kind—ye're very kind; and if ye wad carry a bit scrap o' paper to Wedderburn Castle, greatly would ye aid a distressed damsel."

"I thank ye, my doo, for relying on the word and promise o' John, king and lord o' Little Egypt. Little do they ken me, and less is their knowledge o' our race, who think that we would look upon those who are wronged without seeing them righted. How I heard of your imprisonment or the wrong intended ye, never fash your thumb; though a bird waffed it in my lugs wi' its wings, though it chirped it in them as it chirmed past me, it is enough that I ken o' your wrongs, and that I will assist ye. Trust me maidens."

"I will trust ye," answered Margaret.

"Dinna trust him, sister," said Marion; "he may be some spy of our uncle's."

"Of being a spy," cried the other, "I dinna believe him capable. Stop, Johnny, or king, or whatever ye be,' she added, "and I will throw ye a word or two to carry to Sir Patrick Hume of Wedderburn."

She addressed to him a few words, and threw the paper which contained them into the hands of the gipsy.

"Bless ye for your confidence, my bonny lassie!" said Johnny Faa; "and before the sun gae down, Sir Patrick Hume shall ken that there is ane that likes him pining in a captive's prison, wi' none but ane that his brother likes to bear her company."

The gipsy king was mounted on an active pony, and although it was without a saddle, and reined only by a hempen bridal, he dashed off with it, at the pace of a fleet racer, and directed his course towards the Lammermoors.

It was not noon when he arrived at the Castle of Wedderburn. The porter at the gate retreated in terror as he beheld him, for the name of the Faa king had become terrible on the Borders, and even the king had been glad to grant him terms on his own choosing. On being admitted to the presence of the knight—"What is it, ye vagrant loon," asked Sir Patrick, "that brings ye to venture within the roof o' honest men?"

"Honest!" said the gipsy—"ha! ha! ha! I dare say your honesty and mine is muckle about a par. Between us two it is, take who can. Ye hae the bit land, Sir Patrick, but ye havena a stronger or a more cunning hand, nor yet a sharper sword than the lord o' Little Egypt. Therefore, speak at evens with me, lest ye rue it."

"And wherefore should I speak at evens," answered Hume, "with the like o' you, who are at best but the king o' gaberlunzie men."

"The mischief light on ye!" said the gipsy; "ye have provoked me sair, and I have tholed wi' your slights and taunting; but try me not wi' another word, lest ye rue it, Sir Patrick Hume, and your brother rue it, and every Hume o' the house o' Wedderburn shall be brought to cry dool, for refusing to listen to the words o' Johnny Faa."

"And what wad ye say if ye had your will, ye braggart knave?" cried the knight.

"Merely," retorted the gipsy, "that there is a bonny lassie, ane who is owre guid to be the bride o' sae uncivil an individual as yoursel', now lying in durance, wi' death or perpetual imprisonment before her, while ye havena the courage to lift your hand to her rescue."

"Of whom speak ye?" vociferated the laird of Wedderburn.

"Who,' rejoined the gipsy, slily, "is nearest to your heart?—who nearest to your door? Have you seen her within these four days?"

"What!" exclaimed Sir Patrick, "speak ye of my Margaret?"

"Of whom does your heart tell you that I speak?" said Faa.

"It is then to her that ye allude?" cried Sir Patrick.

"Ay, it is to her," was the reply; "and what knight are ye that would remain here idly within your castle, while death threatens the maiden of your love"?

"Pardon me, stranger," said Sir Patrick; "tell me where she is."

"Ye asked me to pardon ye now," answered the gipsy proudly; "ye knew me before, when the insult was offered, ye know me still. It is not because ye bear a name powerful in arms, nor yet that I have heard of your deeds of war that I come to you; but it is because of the maiden who loves you as the Mayfly does the summer sun. Margaret Sinclair and her sister are the prisoners of their uncle, Sir William Sinclair of Herdmanstone. He has looked with an eye of covetousness upon their estates—he longs to possess them; and, if they be not yielded to him, the life of the fair owners now in his power must pay the forfeit."

The knight clasped the hand of the gipsy. "Thank ye, thank ye," he cried; "I will reward ye for this act of kindness."

"You reward me!" shouted the gipsy king, disdainfully,

"think ye that when the king of Little Egypt does an act of humanity or generosity, he is to be rewarded for it by a Scottish knight! Away with ye, man! I spurn your thanks! I am as far above them as the moon is above the glow-worm that glimmers on the ground—ay, as the sun above the fœtid matter from which it draws life. Know, then, that Margaret Sinclair and her sister will die unless ye have courage to release them, and that before another Sabbath shine a holiday to you."

Wedderburn held his hand in thankfulness. "Forgive me, forgive me," he cried; "I have spoken unjustly to one that has a soul within him, and who has sympathised for those in whom my happiness is bound up. Again, I say, forgive me."

"Ye are forgiven," said the Faa; "and, if assistance be needed in the hour of peril, ye shall find willing hands ready to help ye, though ye deserve it not."

So saying, the Faa beckoned his hand, and withdrew from the presence of Hume. Sir Patrick bore the tidings instantly to his brother; and, within two hours, a hundred of their retainers stood armed around Wedderburn Castle. "To Herdmanstone!" was the cry; "and the rescue of the lady love of the Lord of Wedderburn!"

"Ay, and for Marion, the maid of Kimmerghame!" cried George, the brother of Sir Patrick; "and the Sinclairs shall wear stout bucklers and belts to boot, that this sword pierce not."

The party being marshalled, they took their way across the Lammermoors with the brothers Sir Patrick and George Hume at their head. It was shortly after daybreak when they appeared before Herdmanstone Castle; and the Lady Margaret was the first to perceive their approach.

"Sister!" she cried; "see! see! aid is at hand—the banner of the Humes is waving over the fields of Herdmanstone."

"Ye dream, sister!" said Marion, starting from her couch.

"Nay, I dream not," retorted Margaret. "Arise; through the grey light I perceive the plume of Sir Patrick Hume, and the gay jack which my sister wrought for his brother."

Marion sprang forward to the window where her sister stood; they thrust their hands from the window, to encourage their deliverers to the rescue, while Sir Patrick and his brother answered them back, crying—"We come! we come! The haughty and cruel Sinclair shall repent in blood."

The trumpets of the Humes sounded; and, as if prepared for the approaching conflict, within a few minutes, more than fifty retainers of Sir William Sinclair were in arms. Ignorant of the number of their foes, they rushed forth to meet them, hand to hand, and sword to sword. Long the strife was desperate—it was even doubtful; but, at length, superiority of numbers, on the part of the Humes, prevailed; the retainers of Sir William were routed in all directions, and his castle was assailed, even to its threshold. "To the rescue of the fair maidens!" shouted the Humes. Independent of the immediate retainers of Sir William Sinclair, however, his neighbours came to his aid, and, although they were, at first, as two to one, the conflict had not lasted long when the Humes became the weaker party. The battle raged keenly—swords were broken in the grasp of their owners—the strong war-horse kicked upon the ground, in the agony of death, indenting the earth with its hoofs as it died, leaving the impression of its agony—their wounded men grappled with, and reviled each other, as though they had been foreigners or aliens—spears were broken, and shields clanked against each other—while the war-shout and the dying groan mingled together. Victory seemed still to be doubtful; for, though the Humes fought bravely, and their leaders led them on as with the heroism of despair, yet every minute the numbers of their adversaries increased, while theirs, if the expression might be used, became fewer and more few.

Yet there were two spectators of the conflict who beheld it with feelings that may not, that cannot be described. Now the one beheld the plume which she had adorned for her betrothed husband, severed by the sword of an enemy; while the other saw the gay jerkin, which she had weaved for hers, tarnished with blood. They perceived, also, what we might term the ebbing and the flowing of the deadly feud—the retreating and the driving back; and they were spectators also of the wounded, the dying, and the dead. They saw the party, in whom their hopes were fixed, gradually overpowered—they beheld them fall back beneath the swords of their opponents, disputing inch by inch as they retired, and their hearts fell within them. When hope, fear, and anxiety were wrought to their highest point of endurance, and the party in whom their trust lay seemed to be vanquished, and were driven back, at that period, Johnny Faa, and a number of his followers, rushed to their succour.

"Hurra!" exclaimed the wanderer, "for the braw lasses o' Polwarth and Kimmerghame! Fight, ye Humes! fight! There is a prize before ye worthy a clour on the crown, or even a stab through the brisket."

The approach of the Faa king turned the tide of victory, and his followers shouted—"The bonny lasses o' Polwarth and Kimmerghame shall be free!"

"For ever, ay, and a day after it," cried Sir William, "shall the man inherit a cow's mailing, and a cow to boot, upon the lands o' Herdmanstone, who this day brings me upon his sword the head o' one o' the birkies o' Wedderburn." Sir William, however, became a suppliant for mercy beneath the red sword of Patrick Hume; and his life being granted, the Sinclairs gave their arms into the hands of their opponents. The young brothers each rushed into the house, to the rescue of the captive damsels; and Margaret and Marion each fell upon the neck of the man she loved.

On arriving at Polwarth, they were met by the glad villagers, with whom the fair ladies joined hands, and they danced together in joy around a thorn tree, upon the village green.

In a few weeks, each of the maidens gave her hand to her deliverer—Margaret to Sir Patrick, and Marion to his brother George. On their marriage-day, the dance around the thorn upon the green was resumed, and a festive crowd tripped joyously around it, blessing the bride of Polwarth and her fair sister, Marion of Kimmerghame; and the music to which they that day danced, proceeded from the pipes of king Johnny Faa, who, with half a dozen of his people, sat each with a pair of union pipes beneath his arm, and discoursing "most eloquent music," without "fee, favour, or reward," save that they were partakers of the good things which were that day plentifully circulated upon Polwarth green.

In concluding this account of the co-heiresses of Polwarth and Kimmerghame, it is only necessary to add that, from her union with Hume of Wedderburn, the fair Margaret became the progenitor of the future Earls of Marchmont.



WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

BILL STANLEY;

OR

A SAILOR'S STORY

READER, if thou hast never visited the Fern Isles, but intendest to visit them, thou hast a pleasure in reserve—a positive, downright, profitable pleasure—profitable as regards the health of the body, for a trip upon the sea makes the blood feel ten years younger, and dance in the veins as merrily as the waves around us; and profitable also to the mind, by filling it with fresh objects for wonder and contemplation; and it is a fact very generally overlooked, that the poor jaded mind stands as much in need of new objects to work upon, as its plebeian neighbour, the body, stands in need of rest or change of diet. It is a matter of small consequence, whether you go in a yacht or in a steamer; in the former you will have as much pleasure, in the latter more punctuality. But it is a matter of much consequence what sort of company you have on board—in a word, what materials your fellow-voyagers are made of. If they be all your exceedingly good-natured sort of people—people bowed down with politeness and a desire to please—you won't be half an hour at sea till you find them dead as uncorked small beer that has stood an hour in the sun, or insipid as milk and water. I had as lief dine upon dried veal as be mewed up a day with such society. If you wish to relish the company, and to see character developed, be careful to have it sprinkled with the salt, the pepper, and the mustard of human dispositions; as for the vinegar, even a drop of that would be too much. Sickness might improve your health for the future, but would impair your pleasure for the present; and, in truth, sea-sickness appears to be as pale, ghostly, and uncomfortable a companion as a man may meet withal. But, if the day be fine, and the breeze moderate, there is but little chance of your being sick. At any rate, you will find about half a pound of well-boiled ham, just as the vessel kisses the salt water, an excellent preventive; and half the pleasure of a sea trip lies in the relish, the *salt*, which it gives to the homeliest morsel.

When the Ferns are first seen, what appeared but two or at most three islands, are now found to be a cluster of sixteen or twenty—the ocean-homes of ten thousand times ten thousand sea-fowls; which now may be seen rising in myriads, blackening the air and covering the surface of the islands. as if a thunder-cloud hung over them—anon their snowy wings flash in the sunbeams, countless specks of light begem the seeming cloud, and flickering for a moment, assume the appearance of a magnificent rainbow instinct with motion—and, again, as if turning from the flashing of their own beautiful plumage, settle like darkness on the rocks. To appreciate the striking effect of these islands, it is necessary to sail round them, as well as to land upon them. Each appears to be surrounded by a pier or bulwark of nature's masonry. What is termed the Pinnacle Island, is the most effective. We have been informed that it bears a strong resemblance to St Helena—the grave of Europe's conqueror. The pinnacles are a mass of perpendicular rocks, representing towers, battlements, and fortifications, apparently as perfect to the eye as if formed by the hands of man, but that their terrible strength seems to frown in mockery on his puny efforts. They, alone, are worth visiting again and again. They make man feel his own insignificance, and the power of the Omnipotent voice that called into existence the mighty ocean and the wonders of its bosom. Burns, on visiting a place in the Highlands, said it was "enough to make a blockhead a poet;" and we say that the man who could visit the Fern Isles without feeling the influence of poetry within him, has a head as stupid as the sea-fowl that inhabit them, and an imagination as impenetrable as the rocks that compose the pinnacles.

About three years ago, a mixed party left Newcastle, in a steamer, on a pleasure excursion to the islands. Amongst the company, there was a man of a weather-beaten but happy and intelligent countenance, whose age seemed to be at least sixty, and whose general appearance and manners indicated that he was an old seaman, and perhaps had been a purser or a sailing-master in the navy, or the commander of a merchantman, who had made enough to enable him to cast anchor ashore, in peace, quiet, and plenty, for the remainder of his days. His shrewdness, his knowledge, and his humour, soon rendered him a favourite with the company.

On arriving at the islands, the party went on shore; and, dividing themselves into groups, sat down, and spread out their provisions on the rocks; about a dozen prevailed upon the old sailor to accompany them, and to be their messmate. After dinner, they began to sing, and the old tar was called upon for a song.

"Gentlemen," said he, "I never could raise a single stave in my life; but, if it's all one to you, I will spin you a sailor's yarn."

"Agreed," cried they—"all! all!"

"Well," began the old seaman, "it was a year or two before the short peace of Amiens, that two young seamen were sitting in a public-house in North Shields, which I shall please to speak of as the sign of the Old Ship; and its landlord I shall call Mr Danvers. The name of the one sailor was William Stanley, the other Jack Jenkins. Jack was but a plain fellow, though no lubber; but Bill was a glorious young fellow—the admiration of everybody; though only the son of a poor laundress, who wrought hard to bring him up, while a boy, he had contrived to get knowledge and book-learning enough to have been made commodore of a college. I may here tell you, too, that old Danvers had

a daughter called Mary—one or the best and prettiest girls on all Tyneside. She was Bill's consort on all occasions; and they were true to each other as a needle is to the Pole. Jack and he were friends and shipmates and being sitting together—

"'I say, Bill,' said his comrade, 'as we are to sail upon a long voyage to-morrow, what say you for a run up to Newcastle to the theatre to-night? You shall take Polly Danvers, and I shall take my old woman.' For Jack was married.

"'It is of no use thinking of it,' answered he; 'I am brought up here as though it were my last mooring.'

'"Whew! whew!' whistled the other—'with pretty Polly for a chain cable. But I don't ask you to part company with each other. So let us make ready and start.'

"'No,' added Stanley; 'the best play and the best actors in the world, would be to me to-night like a land-lubber sitting smiling and piping upon a flute on the sea-banks, while I was being dashed to pieces by the breakers under his feet.

"'What are you drifting at, Bill?' said Jenkins; your upper works seem to have hoisted a moon-raker.'

"'I am unhappy, Jack,' said he, earnestly, 'and the cause presses like lead upon my heart. It throbs like fire within my forehead. For more than twenty years I have been tossed about as a helmless vessel, without compass or reckoning. It is hard, Jack, that I can't mention my mother's name, but the blush upon my cheek must dry up the tear that falls for her memory. Three months ago, as you know, I came home, with the earnings of a two years' voyage in my pocket, and I found——O shipmate! when I expected to have flung my savings into my mother's lap, I found her dying in a miserable garret, with scarce a blanket to cover her! She had been long ill; and the rich old rascal called Wates (who came to this part of the country some years ago) seized all but the straw on which she lay for his rent. I thought my heart had burst as I flung myself upon the ground by her side. A mist came over my eyes. I neither knew what I saw nor heard. I felt her cold arms clinging round my neck. She spoke—she told me *my father's name!* Comrade! it was the first time I had heard it! The word father pierced my heart like a dagger, and, in my agony, I knew not what she said. I started, I entreated her to repeat it again! But my mother was silent!—she was dead!—the arms of a corpse were fastened round my neck! With the breath which uttered the name she had not spoken for more than twenty years, her spirit fled—and I—I cannot remember it."

"'Vast there, Bill!' cried Jack, wiping a tear from his eyes; 'that is tragedy enough without going to the play for it. But, for the sake of Mary Danvers, the prettiest girl on Tyneside, (not even excepting my old woman,) cheer up, my lad!'

"'If that should cheer me,' said he, 'I believe it is the principal cause why I am sad to-day.'

"'Why, then,' said Jack, 'don't you take an example by me, and run your frigate to church at once? You will find a plain gold ring is a precious fast anchor.

"'But what,' replied Stanley, 'if the old commodore, her father, won't allow me to take her in tow?'

"'He won't!' cried Jenkins.—'that's a goodun! Old dad Danvers won't allow you to splice with her! What's his reason? I'm sure he can't say but you are as sober as the chief judge of the admiralty.

"'To-night,' replied Stanley, in a tone of agitation, 'he found her in my company, and called, or rather dragged her away; and, as they went, I heard him upbraid her bitterly, and ask if the meanness of her spirit would permit her to throw herself away upon——upon'——William became more agitated, the words he had to utter seemed to stick in his throat; and his friend Jenkins exclaimed—what did he say, Bill—*upon* what was she going to throw herself away?'

"'Upon a beggar's nameless *vastard!* he said,' groaned poor Stanley, striking his hand upon his brow.

"'What d'ye say?' cried Jenkins, clenching his fist; 'had the old fellow's ribs not been removed off the first letter, this hand had shivered them! Flesh and blood, Stanley, how did ye endure it?'

"'I started to my feet,' said he; 'my teeth grated together; but I heard her gentle voice reproving him for the word, and it fell upon my heart like the moon upon the sea, Jack, after a storm. My hand fell by my side. He is *her* father, thought I; and, for the first time in his life, Will Stanley brooked an affront.'

"Just as he was speaking, a gentle tap came to the door 'Good night, Jack,' added he; 'I understand the signal; the old cruiser is off the coast, and now for the smuggling trade.'

"I may tell you that the reason why old Danvers was so averse to his daughter keeping company with Bill Stanley was, that there was a hypocritical middle-aged villain, called Squire Wates—(the same that Bill spoke of as having sold off his mother, and left her to die upon straw)—I hate the very name of the old rascal! Well, you see, this same Squire Wates that I am telling you of, came from abroad some where, and bought a vast deal of property about Shields. He was said to be as rich as an Exchange Jew—and perhaps he was. He had cast an eye upon Mary Danvers, and the grey-haired rascal sought, through the agency of his paltry yellow dross, to accomplish the destruction of the innocent and beautiful creature; and thinking that Will Stanley was an obstacle to the accomplishment of his purpose, he determined to have him removed. He also persuaded old Danvers that he wished to make his daughter his wife. Conscience!—after half drowning such a hoary headed knave, I would have hung him up at a yard-arm, without judge or jury, and buried him in a dunghill without benefit of clergy. He employed a fellow of the name of Villars as a confederate in his base intentions—one who had been thrice a bankrupt, without being able to shew a loss that he had sustained, or pay a shilling to his creditors. This creature he professed to set up in business—in something connected with the West India trade—and he prevailed on landlord Danvers to embark in the speculation, and to risk all that he had saved in the *Old Ship* for five-and-twenty years. So that the firm—if such a disgraceful transaction might be called by that appellation—went by the designation of *Villars & Danvers.* The firm, however, was altogether an invention of Wates, to promote his designs. There was another whom they engaged in their scheme—a fellow who was a disgrace to the sea—the very spawn of salt water—a Boatswain Rigby; and the frigate to which he belonged, was cruising upon the coast for the protection of the coasters. But you will hear more about these worthies by and by.

"It was within a few hours of the time, when, as I told you before, Bill Stanley and Jack Jenkins were to sail upon a twelvemonth's voyage. The vessel to which they belonged was lying out in the harbour below Tynemouth Castle, and sweethearts and wives were accompanying the crew to the beach, where a boat was waiting to take them aboard.

Mary had ventured to accompany William part of the way towards the beach, to bid him adieu; and when, through fear of her father finding them together, she would have returned, he held her hand more firmly within his, and said—'Fear nothing, love; it is the last time we shall see each other for twelve months. Come down as far as the boat; and do not let it be said, when it pulls off, that Bill Stanley was the only soul in the ship's crew, that had not a living creature on the shore to wave *good-by* to—or one to drop a tear for his departure, more than if he were a dog

Upon a better man than ever he was in his life! But,

If I be alone and an outcast in the world, do not let me feel it now.'

"'Willingly,' she replied, 'would I follow you, not only there, but to the ends of the earth. But my father will be on the beach, watching the boat; or, if he be not, the spies of another will be there, and my accompanying you would only make my persecution the greater during your absence.'

"'What!' exclaimed he, 'have I then a rival for your affections, one that I know not of, and whose addresses are backed by your father's influence? Who is he?—or what is his name? Tell me Mary—I conjure you, by your plighted faith.'

"'Give not the name of a rival,' said she, 'to a hypocritical wretch, whose heart I would not tread beneath my heel, for fear of pollution! A rival!—William, I would not insult the meanest reptile that feeds upon garbage, by placing it in competition with a hypocrite so base and mean! A rival!—rather would I breathe the vapours of a ploughed charnel-house for ever, than be blasted with his breath for a single hour! No—my heart is yours—it is wholly yours—fear not.'

"'Mary,' said he, solemnly, 'if I am worthy of your love, I am not unworthy of your confidence. You would not, you could not, bestow such language on the most worthless, where personal indignity had not been offered, or intended you. Name him, I adjure—nay, I *command* you,' he added wildly; 'it will yet be three hours till the vessel sail, and in that period I will avenge the indignity that has been offered to you.'

"'Speak not of such a thing,' said she; 'whatever be his designs, against such a persecutor she is a weak woman who cannot defend herself. Would you raise your hand against a worm, or draw a sword against a venomous fly? Come, think not of it—look not so; would a vessel of the line throw a broadside into a paltry cock-boat? Punish him!—no, despise him!'

"'It may be so,' he rejoined; 'but my heart is to yours as the eyelid is to the eye-ball, and even a moth between them causes agony. Name him, that I may judge of his power to do evil, or the vessel which is this day to sail—sails without me.'

"'Then, that your contempt may equal mine,' added she, think of the creature *Wates!* He whose name stands first on the list of *published* charities—and who sends the newsman abroad to trumpet his piety, while villany lurks in his grey hairs.'

"'What!' he exclaimed wildly—'*Wates!* the murderer of my mother!—who sent his minions to sell the very bed from beneath her, and left her to perish on the ground! Justice! where sleep thy thunderbolts! Mary, we shall return—I go not to sea to-day!'

"'William,' said she affectionately, 'do you then fear to trust me? Did he carry honours in his right hand, and in his left the wealth of the world, and lay them both at my feet—I feel that within me that would spurn them from me, as I would an insect that crawled upon me to sting me. To you would I give my hand and beg for a subsistence, rather than share with him the throne of an empire. What then do you fear? In your own words, if I am unworthy of your confidence, I am unworthy your love.'

"'No, Mary!' he cried, 'it is not fear. Wrong not yourself, neither wrong my bosom, that is full to bursting, by harbouring such a thought. When darkness issues from the sunbeams, I will doubt your affection; when a whirlwind sweeps across the sea, and the billows rise not at its voice, I will fear your truth—not till then. But I know that to associate the name of the most virtuous woman with that of a villain, is to make the world suspect her Ah, Mary! in the innocence of your own heart you suspect not the iniquity of which some are capable. Let the name of a libertine be attached to the character of a man, and especially of a rich man, till his crimes are heaped up like a world of sin upon the shoulders of their contemptible author, and the next sun that rises, in the eyes of the world, melts away their enormity, if not their remembrance; but, if the mere shadow of such a villain's breath pass over the character of a woman, its stains will remain fixed and immoveable, growing in blackness and gathering misery, until life and memory have made their last port. I will not speak of revenge, to distress you—but I shall not undertake this voyage. I will remain on shore, not to guard your innocence but to protect your name from slander.'

"'William,' she answered, 'ignorant of the world I may be; but I know that your remaining on shore would only give rise to the calumnies which you would wish to prevent. You would make yourself an object for the laughter and remarks of your shipmates; and would disoblige your owners, who, after this voyage, have promised you the command of a vessel. And for what would you do this, but through fear of a wretch, on whom I could not waste a single thought, and on whom I regret that I have thrown away a single word.'

"At that moment, Jack Jenkins, with his wife Betty, weeping like a mermaid under his arm, hove in sight, and the moment he beheld his comrade, he called out—'Hollo, Bill! how did you and Polly manage to pass the old Commodore of '*the ship;*' I saw him keeping a look-out abaft there.' But his wife sobbed while he was speaking, and as he approached his shipmate, he continued—'Take aback in time, Bill, and don't marry—I ask your pardon, Polly, and yours too, Betty, my love,' kissing his wife's cheeks; 'I don't exactly mean not to marry either—but this parting company breaks up one's heart, like an old fir-built craft that is not fit for fire-wood. I wish the lubber's back had a round dozen, that invented the word—*good-by!* It always sticks in my throat, like pushing a piece of old junk down it.'

"While he was speaking, a king's cutter shot round a point of land, with a pack of lobsters abaft; and the black fellow, Boatswain Rigby, sat in her bow. She was within twenty yards of where they stood.

"'Fly, William!—fly!' said Mary wildly; 'it is you they seek—my heart tells me it is you—oh, fly!'

"'Be not afraid, dearest,' said Stanley; 'I do not think they mean harm to us, and if they did, flight is impossible.'

"'Oh, run! run!' cried Betty Jenkins; 'see—the marines are handling their muskets.'

"'Run! why, it's of no use running,' said her husband; 'the lobsters would bring a fellow up with their pepper-boxes, before he could run a quarter of a cable's length.'

"The boat took the ground, and Rigby, with a party of sailors and marines, sprang on shore.

"'Well, my hearties,' said the boatswain, 'will either of you volunteer to serve his Majesty?'

"'Why, sir'——Jack Jenkins was replying, when his wife placed her hand upon his mouth, saying—'Are you a fool, Jack?'

"'What!' said the boatswain, 'no volunteers! Well, we want but one of you. This is our man,' and he touched Stanley on the shoulder with his cutlass.

"'Oh!' cried Mary, addressing the boatswain, as she fell upon William's neck; 'spare him! spare him! and with my last coin I will endeavour to procure a substitute in his stead.'

"'It won't do, my pretty maiden,' said Rigby; 'in these times we cant lose so promising a prize, for a woman's tears. Marines, to the boat with him.'

"'Hold! servile slaves!' cried Stanley, as they attempted to drag him away; 'allow me to bid adieu to my Mary, and to my friends here, or I defy the worst you can do.'

"'Quick, then,' said Rigby, 'the service cannot wait for farewells.'

"Mary still clung to William's arm. 'Good-by, Jack,' said he, with the salt water rolling in his eyes, and his heart ready to burst—'and when you return from the voyage, see that you keep the land-sharks off my poor Mary, for the sake of your old messmate.'

"'Belay, Bill!' cried Jenkins; 'my heart's afloat. Heaven bless you, lad, and be at ease respecting Polly. Should any lubber pull alongside, my name's not Jenkins if I don't force him to strike his colours, and shove off with broken timbers. Good-by, Bill—give me your hand; and, though they were my last words, I say—I'm blowed if ever I shook the flipper of a better fellow!'

"'Mary!' sobbed he, pressing her to his heart; 'farewell, love!—we shall meet again!—you won't forget Bill Stanley!'

"'Stay! oh, stay!' she exclaimed. But the boatswain waved his hand impatiently, and his crew rudely tearing them asunder, William Stanley was dragged to the boat, and borne on board the frigate.

"Well, twelve months passed, after the impressment of William Stanley, and Squire Wates found that his wealth offered no temptation to Mary Danvers, to enable him to effect her ruin. He, however, had inveigled her father into his meshes; and, through the pretended failure of the mercantile speculation in which Villars and old Danvers had been engaged, the former brought a claim of five hundred pounds against the latter, who had lost his all. And the plan of the villains was, that Villars should cast the old man into prison, and that Wates should come forward, and professing to pay the debt, set the father at liberty, and obtain, through the daughter's gratitude, what her virtue spurned. To ensure success to this master-stroke of their wickedness it was to be attended by a mock-marriage, in which Boatswain Rigby, (the frigate to which he belonged being again lying off Tynemouth,) was, for a *consideration*, to officiate as chaplain.

"It was on the very day that this piece of iniquity was hatched, that Jack Jenkins, having returned—and having learned from his wife, and from Mary Danvers, of some of the attempts that had been made by Squire Wates, during his absence, and since the impressment of his comrade—hurried to the house of the old rascal, with a rope's end in his hand. He found the street door open, and, without knocking, he went to the foot of the stairs, and demanded to see Squire Wates.

"'You can't see him, fellow said a portly, pampered man-servant.

"'Can't see him,' roared Jack; 'he shall see me presently, and feel me too. So, come along, Mr Powdered-pate; shew me where he is, or I'll capsize you head and heels.'

"The old villain, himself, hearing the uproar, came blustering out of a room, crying—'Who are you, fellow? and how dare you, in such a manner, break into my house? What is your business with me?'

"'Vast there with your questions, old leprous-livered knave!' vociferated Jenkins. As to who I am, I am a better fel ow than ever stood in your shoes; and, as to daring to break into your house, before I leave it, I shall dare to break your head! And as to my business with you, I intend to make you *sensible* of that too,' and as he uttered the word *sensible*, he shook the piece of rope in his hand, and continued—'Now, I have answered your questions; answer one to me. Do you remember a lad of the name of Bill Stanley—eh?'

"The Squire shook with terror; but endeavouring to assume an air of authority, stammered out—'No—no—fellow; I—I know no such person. Begone, sir. Be—begone, I say.'

"'Smash me if I do!' added Jenkins. 'And belike you don't know Polly Danvers, either? Well, perhaps this piece of old junk may sharpen your memory!'

"Wates called upon his servants for assistance.

"'Hands off, ye beggarly swabs! or kiss the boatswain's sister!' continued the sailor, laying lustily around him, and causing the domestics to shrink back. 'Vast there!' he continued, laying hold of the squire, who attempted to escape; 'not so fast—I an't quite done with you yet. Now, you see, I'm an old friend and shipmate of Bill Stanley's; and the day that he was pressed, and you were the cause of it, Bill says to me—'Jack,' says he, 'when I am away, see that no land-shark comes alongside my Polly.' 'Fear nothing, Bill,' says I, 'hang me if I don't—there's my hand on't.' Now, I've been at sea ever since, until the other day, and my old woman tells me that you, you cream-faced scoundrel, not only had the impudence to pull alongside Polly Danvers but had the audacity to propose——shiver me if I can name it—but take that!'——

"And so saying, he began to lay the rope fiercely round the shoulders of his victim; and, as the servants again closed upon the sailor to rescue their master, he dashed them to the ground, to the right and to the left, and finally rushed out of the house, crying—'Who shall say that Jack is the lad that would break his promise?'

"I told you it was a part of the plot of Wates, that his confederate Villars, was to cast old Danvers into prison, on account of the pretended debt. The old landlord was sitting in the parlour of the *Old Ship*, trembling at the horrors of a jail, and fearing every moment the entrance of a sheriff's officer to arrest him, while his wife and daughter endeavoured to comfort him, and he said mournfully—'Wife, after being married thirty years as we have been I did not expect that we should have been parted in this way. I did not think that, after toiling in the *Old Ship* here for twenty years, to save a matter of money for our daughter, that I should lose all, and my hair grow white in a prison. But it is of no use mourning about it; for I question if those for whom we wished the money would have thanked us. I know I would not have seen a father or mother of mine dragged to jail like a common thief, if I by any means could have prevented it.' And, as he spoke, he cast a look of sorrow and upbraiding upon Mary, who wept on her mother's shoulder.

"'Don't be cruel, husband,' said his wife; 'how can you distress our daughter? I am sure she can't help the state we are reduced to, any more than I can. But I always said what all your jobbing and trafficking in company with the bankrupt Villars, would end in. I know thou'rt suffering enough, and we are all suffering; but don't be reflecting upon our dear Mary, for a better child never parents had.'

"'I an't making reflections,' replied he, peevishly; 'only I'm saying, I would not have stood so by my father. It is no reflection to say that Mary might have been a lady, and then I am sure I should not have been dragged from this parlour—where I have sat for twenty years—to a dungeon in a jail.'

"'Father!' said Mary, 'what would you have me do? Would you have me become an object for the virtuous to shun, for your enemies to triumph over and despise, and for the abandoned to insult? Would you have me to sell my purity, my peace of mind, my present and eternal happiness, to a miscreant who carries sanctity on his brow, and morality between his teeth, while his heart is a putrid sepulchre? Would you have me to do this to save you from a prison?—and to which you have been brought by your own simplicity. To assist you, I will become the servant of servants—I would brush the dust from the shoes of strangers, in this house where I was born. But, while the tear blanches my cheeks for your misfortunes, cause them not to burn with shame.'

"'Why, daughter, replied he, angrily, 'I don't understand thy high words at all. But though I don't know so much of my dictionary as thou dost, I know those books

you read have turned thy head with foolish and high notions. I know you won't have Mr Wates, because he is a thought oldish, and belike doesn't make love like one of the romance sparks you read about. But, I say, I'm neither blind nor deaf, and, for all that you have said, I know as how it is marriage, and nought else, that Mr Wates intends. But, rich as he is, you won't have him, but will see your poor old father dragged through the streets, like a thief to a prison. O Mary! it is a sore thing to have an ungrateful child!'

"'O husband!—husband!' said Mrs Danvers; 'they were thy high notions, and none of our dear daughter's, that has brought us to this. But it is not my part to add to thy sorrows, when thou art about to be torn from my side. Alack! I never thought to be made a widow in this sort.'

"'Wife!—wife!' cried he impatiently; 'be it my blame, or whose blame it may, we can't make a better of it now: but it is very hard to have lost the earnings of twenty years, and and to be parted from wife and child. Don't be angry with me, daughter. Your father meant all he has said or done for your good. Come, give your old father a kiss and forgive him. It may be the last he will ever receive from you in his own house.'

"She threw her arms around his neck and wept; and while the father and daughter embraced each other, a sheriff's officer entered the house.

"'Well-a-day!—well-a-day!' cried Mrs Danvers as she perceived him; 'thy errand, and the disgrace of it, will break my heart.'

"'Don't be distressed, good woman, said the officer, 'it is no such disgrace but that many of the best in the country must submit to it every day. Mr Danvers,' added he, 'I am sorry to inform you, you must walk with me. This paper will inform you, you are my prisoner.'

"'It is very hard,' said the old man: 'I say, sir, it is very hard to be called a prisoner, in a free country, for doing nothing at all. Heaven knows about this here debt that is brought against me, for I don't. But I know that locking me up in a jail won't pay it.'

"'Oh, cruel law!' exclaimed Mary; 'framed by fools, and put in force by usurers. Let justice laugh at the wise legislators, who shut up the springs, and expect the reservoirs to be filled.'

"'Why, miss,' said the official, 'I didn't make the law; I be only the officer of the law. So come along, Mr Danvers, my good man, for I can't stop all day to hear your daughter's speeches. I have other jobs of the same sort in hand, and business must be attended to.'

"'Go, unfeeling man,' answered Mary, 'we will go with you. Bear with misfortune, my dear father, like a man. I will accompany you—take my arm. If I have hung upon yours with pride, upon more joyful occasions, it shall not be said that I was ashamed for you to rest upon mine, when they led you through the streets to a prison.' And she accompanied him to the place of confinement.

"It was two days after old Danvers had been taken to prison, that the frigate into which William Stanley had been impressed made towards the land, and rode off the mouth of the Tyne, while a boat's crew were ordered on shore. Boatswain Rigby, apprehensive that William would request to be one of them, and that his request might be granted, had, previous to the boat leaving the vessel, sought to quarrel with him, and struck him; and requested of the lieutenant, that, in consequence of the insolence he had used towards him, he should not be permitted to go on shore, but, as a punishment, placed on duty.

"Poor Stanley was walking the deck, saying unto himself—'Refused permission to go ashore! Yes, Rigby! petty tyrant as thou art, thou shalt rue it! Refused a privilege that would have caused a slave to rebel, had he been denied it. But the time will come, when we shall meet upon terms of equality; and were his cowardice equal to his brutality—yea, were he shielded by a breast-plate hard as his own heart—my revenge shall find a passage through both; and his blood shall wash out the impression and the shame of the blow, with which to-day he dared to smite me as a dog. The remembrance of that blow sticks as a dagger in my throat—its remembrance chokes me!' And, hurried on by the agitation of his feelings, he spoke aloud as he continued. 'Not only denied to set my foot upon the place of my nativity, but struck!—yes, struck like a hound, by a creature I despise! O memory!' he added, 'torture me not! Here, every remembered object strikes painfully on my eyeballs! The church and the churchyard, where my mother's body now mingles with the dust, are now before me, and I am prohibited from shedding a tear upon her grave.* The banks of the Tyne, where I wandered with my Mary, while it sighed affection by our side, and the blue sea, which lay behind us, raising a song of love, are now visible—but though they are still beautiful, they are as beautiful things that lived and were loved, but that are now dead!'

"In the intensity of his feelings, he perceived not a boat which drew alongside; and, while he yet stood in a reverie, his old crony, Jack Jenkins, sprang on board, and, assisted by a waterman, raised Mary Danvers to the deck.

"'Yonder he is,' exclaimed Jack, 'leaning over the gunwale, as melancholy as a merman making his last will and testament in the presence of his father Neptune.'

"Stanley started round at the voice of his friend; he beheld his betrothed wife; for you know they were the same as betrothed—they had vowed to be true to each other, and, I believe, broken a ring betwixt them.

"'My own Mary!' he cried, and sprang forward to meet her. The poor things fell upon each other's neck, and wept like children.

"'Shove me your fist, my hearty, cried Jenkins, 'as soon as you have done there. I thought I would give you a bit of an agreeable surprise.'

"'There, Jack!—there, my honest old friend!' cried Bill, stretching out his one hand, and with the other supporting his sweetheart. 'My head and heart are scudding beneath a sudden tempest of joy! Speak, Mary, love; let me again hear your voice thrilling like music through my breast! O Jack! this visit is like one who has been run down in a squall at midnight, and ere he is aware that the waters have covered over him, he finds himself aloft, listening to the harps of the happy.'

"'I don't know what it is like, Bill,' said the other; 'but it an't like the meetings we used to have.'

"'Why so silent, love,' said William, addressing Mary; 'in another hour I shall be off duty, and in one day of happiness let us forget the past.'

"'Dear William,' she replied, 'I know not what I should say, nor what I should conceal. I have so little of joy to communicate, that I would not embitter the pleasure of the present short hour, by a recital of the events that have occurred during your absence.'

"'Hide nothing from me, Mary,' said he earnestly; 'but tell me, have my forebodings, regarding the monster Wates, been but too true? Or are your parents———You tremble, love—you are pale! O Jenkins, speak!—tell me what is the meaning of this?'

"'Drop it, Bill, my dear rellow, said the other, 'drop it. You have got Polly alongside of you there, with a heart as sound and true to you as when you left her; and don't distress her with questions; she didn't come aboard for that. I served out the old fellow Wates, as you requested me, with a rope's end, t'other night, and that pretty smartly too.

* From the London police reports of last week, it would appear that to weep over a parent's grave is an offence against the law! What law we know not but it is not the law of nature.

And, with regard to father Danvers, why, poor soul, somehow or other, misfortune has got the weather-gage of him, and the other day he was taken to jail. So, say no more about it, Bill—we can't mend it.'

"'Why,' he exclaimed, stamping his foot as he spoke, 'why am I a slave? And who, my beloved Mary—who now shall protect you? But I can still do something. I have a bank bill for a hundred pounds, the savings of former voyages. I know not why I took it out of my locker this morning. I had it carefully placed away with the ringlet which I cut from your brow, dearest. Here are both; I will keep the ringlet, and think it dearer than ever; take you the note, my love; it may be of service to your father.'

"'No, no, William,' she cried, 'I must not, I cannot! Dearest, most generous of men, do not *pity* me, or I shall wither in your sight. Look on me as you were wont. But, oh! let me not stand before you as a beggar. Keep it—as you love me, keep it—make me not ashamed to look in your face.'

"'Then take it, Jack, take it, said Stanley, handing him the note; 'do with it as I desire. Say nothing more now; for here comes our Boatswain Rigby, the curse of our ship's crew, and the disgrace of the service.'

"Mary shuddered as Rigby approached them; and boisterously said—'Who have you got there, fellow, and you upon duty? I shall report you instantly. Some of your old friends, and meditating an escape with them, I see.' And, turning to Jenkins, he added—'Who, sir, gave you permission to come on board this vessel, and to bring *a woman of that description* along with you? Off, instantly, or I shall detain you too. You, girl, must remain;' and he approached her familiarly to take her by the arm. Stanley sprang forward, exclaiming—'Hold, sir, hold! You have insulted her by your words; but touch not, as you would remain a living man, the hem of her garment.'

"'Begone to your duty, presumptuous slave!' cried the boatswain fiercely; 'begone!' And, as he spoke, he raised his hand, and struck him on the breast.

"'Again!—ha!—ha!—ha!' exclaimed William, like a demon laughing through excess of torture; 'twice you have struck me, Rigby, to-day!—struck me in the presence of her who is dearer to me than life! Now, heaven have mercy on thee!' And, seizing the boatswain by the breast, he hurled him violently on the deck, and planted his foot upon his bosom.

"'William!—dear William!' cried Mary; 'forbear!—forbear!'

"'Bill, Bill, my dear fellow!' cried Jack, 'don't lose your life for the sake of a ruffian.'

"William continued standing with his foot upon his breast, laughing in the same wild and fearful manner, and shouting—'struck me!' while Rigby called for help. A number of the ship's crew sprang forward to the rescue of the boatswain, who, rising, cried—'The irons instantly! Set a double watch over him! He has attempted, as ye have witnessed, the life of an officer, and his first promotion shall be the yard-arm.'

'While they were placing the irons upon him, Mary threw herself at Rigby's feet, exclaiming—'Oh, spare him!—save the life of my William!—by her that bore you, or that loves you, save him!—save him!'

"'Rise, Mary!' cried William, 'that our farewell glance be not one of reproach. Pray for vengeance on my enemy! Farewell, Jack—for ever this time! See my Mary safe!' And, as they were bearing him away, he turned his head towards her, and cried—'Dearest, we shall meet hereafter, where the villain and the tyrant cannot enter.'

"She fell insensible on the deck, and, in a state of unconsciousness, was conveyed on shore by Jenkins.

"The frigate was commanded by Captain Sherbourne, and, when the officers were assembled to hold a court-martial over poor Stanley, he said, addressing Rigby—'There is not a man in the British navy, Boatswain Rigby, more determined than myself to preserve order and discipline; but while, as captain of this vessel, I am compelled to enforce the law, I am no advocate for the inhuman and degrading lash; nor can I, with indifference, sentence a brave fellow to be hung up for doing that which the best feelings of his nature, and the sentiments that make a hero, prompted him to do. I sit here as a judge, and am neither advocate for the prisoner, nor your accuser; but, if the law must be satisfied, the offence, wherever it is found, shall be punished, whether in the accused or in the accuser. For it has not escaped my observation, that no officer under me has ever found a fault in the prisoner, save yourself. Are you then resolved and prepared to prosecute your charge?'

"'I am both resolved and prepared, Captain Sherbourne,' said Rigby; 'and I demand the satisfaction of the laws of my country and the service, not only as an officer who has been insulted and injured, but as a British officer and subject, whose life has been attempted.'

"'This is a serious charge, boatswain,' said Captain Sherbourne; 'let the prisoner be brought forward.'

"The culprit was brought up, guarded, and in fetters, and, being placed before his judges—'Prisoner,' began the captain, 'I deeply regret that one of your appearance, and of your uniform excellent conduct and courage, while under my command, should be brought before me under such circumstances as those in which you now stand; and I regret the more that, if the charges be proved, the proofs of your former character and courage, which are known to us, will be of no avail. You are charged not only with striking your commanding officer, which is in itself a heinous offence, but also with attempting his life. Do you plead guilty or not guilty?'

"'That,' replied the prisoner, 'is as your honours please to interpret the deed. But there is no such charge reckoned against me in the log-book aloft.'

"'You then plead not guilty,' said the captain.

"'I am guilty,' answered he, 'of having acted as it was the duty of a man to act. I am guilty of having convinced a villain, that a proud heart may be found beneath a plain blue jacket. I am guilty of having proved that there are souls and feelings before the mast, as high-minded and as keen as upon the quarter-deck. But 'the head and front of my offending hath this extent, no more.''

"'He speaks bravely,' muttered some of those who heard him; 'the chaplain himself couldn't have said it so well by half.'

"'Boatswain,' said the captain, in the hearing of the prisoner, 'state the particulars of your charge against him.'

"'While it was his turn on duty,' said Rigby, 'I found him neglecting it, and plotting his escape from the frigate, in conversation with a suspicious-looking man, and a girl of common fame'———

"''Tis false!—despicable recreant!—'tis false!" interrupted William wildly; 'she is spotless as the fountains of light! Breathe again dishonour on her name, and these chains that bind me shall hurl you, with the falsehood blistering on your tongue, down to'———

"'Silence, young man!' interposed the captain, 'I command you. If you have cause of complaint you will afterwards be heard. You may be mistaken, Mr Rigby, regarding the character of the young woman, and you will not better your cause in our eyes, by unnecessarily blackening the prisoner's.'

"'Captain Sherbourne, inquired the boatswain, in an offended tone, 'do you question my honour?'

"'I permit no such interruptions, sir,' said the captain; 'we sit here to deal with facts, not with honour. Go on with your charge.'

'When,' resumed Rigby, 'I overheard him plotting his escape from the service, and commanded him to his duty;

he haughtily rebelled; and, on my ordering the strangers on shore, he sprang forward, and dashing me on the deck, stamped his foot upon my breast, threatening and attempting to murder me, as these witnesses will prove.'

"'Stand forward, my good fellows,' said Captain Sherbourne, addressing two of the seamen, who had been witnesses of the assault, and assisted in rescuing the boatswain. Give your evidence truly. What do you know of this affair?'

"'Why your honour,' said the first seaman, 'just that the boatswain was lying upon the deck, and that Bill there had his foot upon his breast.

"'Do you suppose,' inquired the Captain 'he had a design upon his life?'

"'Please your honour,' answered the seaman, 'I can't say; but you had better ask himself. If he had, he won't deny it; for I'll take my Bible oath that Bill, poor fellow, never hove the hatchet in his life—and I don't believe he would do it to save his life. I could always be as sure of what he said, as I am of our latitude when your honour's own hand works it out.'

"'Well,' inquired the Captain, addressing the other seaman, 'what evidence have you to offer?'

"'I don't know anything about evidence, your honours,' answered the seaman. 'The boatswain was lying on the deck, and poor Bill had his foot upon his breast sure enough, and was laughing in such a dismal way as made me think that he had gone maddish through ill-usage or something. For, poor fellow, he was never easily raised, and though brave as a lion, was harmless as a lamb—all the crew will swear that of him.

"'Prisoner,' said the Captain, 'I am sorry that the evidence of these witnesses, who seem as sorry for your fate as I am, but too strongly confirm, at least a part of the charges against you. If you have anything to say in your defence, the court is inclined to hear you.'

"'I am neither insensible of, nor ungrateful for the kindness of my commander,' answered William; 'and for the sake of her and her only, of whom the boatswain dared to speak as one dishonoured, I do not hold life without its value. But I disdain to purchase it by the humiliation of vindicating myself farther from the accusations of a wretch whom I despise. Let the law take its award. Death is preferable to being the servant of a slave.'

"'I know not,' whispered Captain Sherbourne to his first lieutenant, 'how my lips shall pronounce sentence of death on this brave young fellow. His heroic courage and his talents compel me to revere and love him—and there is something, I know not what, in his features, haunts me as a lost remembrance.' Then turning toward the prisoner, he added—'Before the sentence of the court is passed, whatever requests you may wish to have performed, I will see them faithfully carried into effect.'

"'Thanks! thanks!' replied William; 'I have but little to offer in return for your goodness; but the same spirit that made me resent the indignity of my accuser, would, were my hands free, cause me to embrace your knees. I have but three requests to make. I wish my watch to be given to her who is dearest to me on earth—Mary Danvers; my quadrant and other matters to my friend Jenkins, who sails in the ship '*Enterprise*,' now lying in the river; and my last request is, that, with the ten guineas belonging to me, and now in the possession of the purser, a stone may be placed upon my mother's grave—which Mary Danvers will point out—with these words chiseled upon it—

To the Memory
of the
Amiable and Unfortunate
MATILDA STANLEY.
By Desire of her Unfortunate Son.'

"'Matilda Stanley!' exclaimed Captain Sherbourne, in a tone of agitation, 'was that the name of your mother?'

"'It was, your honour,' replied William, 'and there were few such mothers.'

"'And your father!—your father!' repeated the Captain, with increased agitation; 'what knew you of him?'

"'Alas! nothing!' exclaimed the prisoner bitterly, and the tears gushed down his cheeks; 'but, oh, recal not to my memory in a moment like this—recal not my mother's ——No! no! my sainted mother!'

"'O conscience! conscience!' exclaimed the Captain, and starting to his feet, and gasping in eagerness as he spoke. 'One question more—and your mother's father was a dissenting clergyman in the village of——name!—name the place! on that depends your life, and my happiness or misery.'

"'In the village of —— in Westmoreland,' replied William; 'but he survived not his daughter's broken heart. You knew them, then? Oh, did you know my father?'

"'My son! my son! come to a father's heart,' exclaimed the Captain, springing forward and falling on his neck; '*I am your father!* Shade of my wronged Matilda! look on this!'

"'My father!' exclaimed William, 'have I found him! and in such an hour! But, if you loved my mother, wherefore'——

"'Upbraid me not, my son,' interrupted the Captain, 'mingle not gall with my cup of joy. Your mother was my wife—my first, my only one. Circumstances forced me to exact a promise from her, that our marriage should be concealed until I dared to acknowledge it, and long captivity severed me from her; until, on my return, I could obtain no trace of either of you. How I have mourned for her, all who now stand beside me have been the daily witnesses. My son! my son!'

"'My father! O my father!' exclaimed William; 'but at this moment you are also my *judge*.'

"'No! no!' cried the Captain. 'Seamen, strike off the fetters from your commander's son. Rigby, at another tribunal I will be surety for the appearance of my son.'

"The fetters were struck off from William's hands and feet, and officers and men burst simultaneously into three times three, loud, long, and hearty cheers

"The boatswain, fearing that a worse thing might come upon him, fell on his knees before the Captain, and made a full confession of his shameful intrigue with Squire Wates, and begged forgiveness, as his kidnapping of William had been the means of finding the commander his son. The rascal was forgiven, but dismissed the frigate.

"But I must return to poor Mary. She was sitting beside her father in the prison, when he addressed her saying—'Come, come, child, thou saidst thou wouldst sing and read to me, and is this thy singing—nothing but sighing and tears. I'm saying, is this thy promised singing, daughter?—but it is perhaps the fittest singing for a jail.'

"'Ah, father!' said Mary, 'you know I would not willingly add to your sorrows. But can you forbid me to weep for him, who, from childhood, has been to me as a brother—whom I have long regarded as a husband, and who, *for my sake*, must in a few hours die as the vilest criminal.'

"'Why, I'm saying, daughter,' said old Danvers, 'let's have no more about it. I'm as sorry for Bill Stanley as thou canst be for thy life. But I say, girl, they can expect no better who fly in the face of a father. I am sure we have distress enough of our own, if we would only think about it, without meddling with that of other people's. Is it not bad enough that thy father is shut up here within these iron bars, and perhaps thou and thy mother will be driven to beg upon the streets, when thou mightest have been riding in thy carriage. I'm saying, is not this misery

enough, without thy crying to do with. Why, Mary, thou his wife.'

people thou hast nothing be thankful thou an't

"'Father! father!' she said, wringing her hands together, 'murmur not at our lot, nor upbraid me with sympathising in misery to which yours is mercy! What are the sufferings of want compared with what I now feel! To save him I could smile and be happy, though doomed to beg and kiss the foot that spurned me from them.'

'The sheriff's officer and Mrs Danvers at this moment entered, and the latter rushed towards her husband, exclaiming—'O husband! husband! the worst is come at last! They have seized house and all!—and, Mary, thou and I are left without a roof to cover us! Thou hast no home now, hinny! Your father is shut up in this filthy prison, and your mother never knew what misery was till now!'

"'Wife! wife!' cried old Danvers, 'what dost thou say?—seized the house, too!—and my wife and daughter driven to the street! O wife!—I say, I wish I had never been born! Mary! Mary, love! what wilt thou do now?'

"'Do not, my dear parents,' said Mary, 'repine at the hand of Providence. He who clothes the lily, and feeds the fowls of the air, will not permit us to perish in the midst of Christians.'

"'Daughter! daughter!' cried her mother, 'thou little knowest what a hard-hearted and wicked world we live in! Humanity and honesty, and everything that is good, have gone out of it. The world was not so when I knew it first.'

"'Well! well!' cried old Danvers; 'if the world be as bad as you say it is, it is one comfort that I shall not be long in it; for I cannot live to know that my wife and child are beggars, and that I am a prisoner, starving in a jail.'

"At this moment, Wates entered the room, and addressing Mr Danvers, said—'I have but this morning heard of your misfortunes, Mr Danvers, and have not lost a moment in hastening to offer my assistance. To your daughter I now offer my *hand*, my fortune, and my heart; and let her but say she will accept them, and this day ends your imprisonment.'

"'There! old woman!' exclaimed Mr Danvers, in ecstasy, 'what dost thou and our daughter think of that? Did I not say that Mr Wates meant marriage, and nothing else but marriage—and was not I right? Thou shalt have her, sir, with a father's blessing, and I will pray for thee the longest day I have to live. Fall on thy knees, mother Danvers—fall on thy knees, and thank the kind, good, generous gentleman. Daughter, why dost thou stand there and say nothing? Did I not always say thou wast born to be a lady?'

"'For the sake of human nature, Mr Wates,' said Mary, 'I will suppose that your intentions are now honourable. I will believe that you mean kindly, that you are willing to assist my parents, and rescue them from their distress. But, could I even forget the past—could I forget that for many months you have sought my destruction, and have striven to make me become that which would have made me to be despised in my own eyes, and an outcast in those of others—if, sir, I could even forget these things, I could not give my hand to one whom my heart has been accustomed to detest. For your offered kindness I would thank you with tears, but I can only repay you with gratitude. If, however, your assistance to my parents is only to be procured through my consenting to your wishes, they must remain as they now are, until it shall please Providence to send them a more disinterested deliverer. Betwixt us there is a gulf fixed that shall ever divide us—it is death and aversion—therefore, think not of me.'

"'Daughter!' cried the old man wrathfully, 'hast thou taken leave of thy senses altogether?'

"'Come, Mary, love,' said her mother; 'now that poor William must be no more, and that Mr Wates means honourably, be not obstinate—do not suffer your father to die in a place like this, and your mother to beg upon the streets.'

"'Mother!' cried Mary, vehemently, 'with the last of my blood will I toil for your support; but speak not of that man to me. Keep, sir, your wealth for one to whom it may have attractions, and to whom you have never offered dishonour. I despise it, and I despise you; and this shallow and cruel artifice will avail you nothing.'

"'Consent,' said Wates, 'and, to-night, our hands shall be united.'

"'Wife! wife!' cried the old man, 'we will humble ourselves at her feet; belike she wont see her father and mother weeping, on their knees before her, and say to them—die!' And they knelt before her.

"'Rise! my parents!—rise!' she exclaimed; 'if ye would not have your daughter's blood upon your head. Monster she added, turning to Wates, 'can ye talk of marriage to me, when he to whom my heart and vows are given, if he be not already dead, must in a few hours die a death of shame!'

"'And will you not save him,' said Wates, eagerly.

"'Save him!—how? how?' she cried.

"'Consent to be mine, and within an hour I shall procure his pardon,' said he.

"'Villain! villain! would you deceive me with the snare of the devil?' she exclaimed.

"'I swear it,' he answered.

"'Save him! save him!' she exclaimed wildly; but again cried suddenly—'No, no!—wretch, ye mock me!'

"'Yes, he mocks you, Mary,' said Jack Jenkins, who had just entered. 'I could find in my heart to kick the old murderer through those iron gratings; for I know it is all through him that poor Bill must, before the sun go down lose his life.'

"While Jack was speaking, the locks of the prison-doors were again heard creaking, and in rushed William, his father, and the officers of the frigate, and they dragged the rascal Rigby along with them.

'There was a cry of 'Mary!' 'William!' and a rush to meet each other. But the best scene was the confusion of Wates, when his brother knave exposed his villany; and Captain Sherbourne ordering them to begone, Jack Jenkins rushed after them, for the pleasure of kicking them down the prison stairs; but Bill, catching him by the arm, said—'Messmate, let me introduce you to *my father!*'

"'*Your father!*' exclaimed Mary; and it would have been hard to say which of the two was nearest fainting They left the prison together, old Danvers and all; and Mary and Bill were soon spliced. They were the happiest couple alive. He rose to be post captain; and I hope to see him an admiral. So, gentlemen, that's an end to my yarn."

"But," inquired the company, "what became of Jack Jenkins?" "Why, I am Jack Jenkins," answered he; "sailing-master, with half-pay of five and sixpence a-day, besides two shillings as interest for prize-money—thanks to my old friend Bill."



WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE RECOLLECTIONS OF A VILLAGE PATRIARCH.

THERE is no feeling more strongly or more generally implanted in the human breast, than man's love for the place of his nativity. The shivering Icelander sees a beauty, that renders them pleasant, in his mountains of perpetual snow; and the sun-burnt Moor discovers a loveliness in his ultry and sandy desert. The scenes of our nativity become implanted on our hearts like the memory of undying dreams; and with them the word *home* is for ever associated, and

"Through pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home."

We cannot forget the place where our eyes first looked upon the glorious sun; where the moon was a thing of wonder, the evening companion of our childish gambols, ioining with us in the race, and flying through the heavens as we ran! where we first listened to the song of the lark, received the outpourings of a mother's love upon our neck, or saw a father's eyes sparkle with joy as he beheld his nappy children around him; where we first breathed affection's tale or heard its vows, and perchance were happy, wretched, blest, or distracted, within a short hour. There is a magic influence about nativity that the soul loves to cherish. Its woods, its rivers, its hills, its old memories, fling their shadows and associations after us, and over us, even to the ends of the earth; and while these whisper of our early joys, or of what we fancied to be care ere we knew what care was—its churchyard tells us we have a portion there—that there our brethren and our kindred sleep. We may be absent from it until our very name is forgotten; yet we love it not the less. The man who loves it not, hath his affections "dark as Erebus." It is a common wish, and it hath patriotism in it too, that where we drew our first breath, there also we should breathe our last. Yet in this world of changes and vicissitudes, such is not the lot of many. While I thus moralize, however, I detain the reader from the Recollections of the Village Patriarch; and as some of the individuals mentioned in his reminiscences may be yet living, I shall speak of the place in which he dwelt, as the village of A———.

The name of the patriarch was Roger Rutherford—he was in many respects a singular old man. He was the proprietor of three or four cottages, and of some thirty acres of arable land adjoining to them. He was a man of considerable reading, of some education, and much shrewdness. His years, at the period we speak of, were fourscore and four. By general consent, he was a sort of home-made magistrate in the village, and the umpire in all the disputes which arose amongst his neighbours. It was common with them to say, instead of going to law—"We will leave the matter to old Roger;" and the patriarch so managed, or balanced his opinions, that he generally succeeded in pleasing both parties. He was also the living, or walking history, or chronicle of the village. He could record all the changes that had taken place in it for more than seventy years; and he could speak of all the ups and downs of its inhabitants. What Byron beautifully says of the ocean—

"Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow,"

might have been said of the memory and intellect of the patriarch. He had also a happy art in telling his village tales, which rendered it pleasant to listen to the old man.

It was in the month of August 1830, and just before the crops were ready for the sickle, old Roger was sitting, as his custom was, (when the weather permitted,) enjoying his afternoon pipe on a stone seat at the door, when a genteel-looking stranger, who might be about fifty years of age, approached him, and entered into conversation with him. The stranger asked many questions concerning the village and its old inhabitants, and Roger, eyeing him attentively for the space of a minute, said—"Weel, ye seem to ken something about the town, but I cannot charge my memory with having the smallest recollection o' ye; however, sit down, and I shall inform ye concerning whatever ye wish to hear."

So the stranger sat down beside the patriarch, on the stone seat by the door, and he mentioned to him the circumstances respecting which he wished to be informed, and the individuals concerning whom he wished to learn tidings. And thus did the old man narrate his recollections, and the tales of

THE VILLAGE.

"I have often thought, sir," he began, "that A—— is one of the bonniest towns on all the Borders—indeed I may say in all broad Scotland. I dinna suppose ye will find its marrow in England; and I dinna say this through any prejudice in its favour or partiality towards it, because I was born in it, and have lived in it now for the better part o' fourscore and four years; but I will leave your own eyes to be the judge. It is as clean as the hearth-stane of a tidy wife—and there certainly is a great improvement in it, in this respect, since I first knew it. There is the bit garden before almost every door, wi' vegetables in the middle, flowers alang the edges, a pear, or cherry tree running up the side o' the house, and the sweet, bonny brier mixing wi' the hedges round about. It lies just in the bosom of woods, too in the centre of a lovely haugh, where the river soughs along, like the echo of the cooing of the cushats in the plantations. The population is four times what it was when I remember it first, and there are but few of the old, original residenters left. There have been a great many alterations, changes, and improvements in it, since I first kenned it; but young folk will have young fashions, and it is of no use talking to them. The first inroad upon our ancient and primitive habits, was made by one Lucky Riddle taking out a license to sell whisky and tippenny, and other liquors. She hadna carried on the trade for six months, until a great alteration was observable in the morals o' several in the parish. It was a sad heart-sore to our worthy minister. He once spoke to me of having Lucky Riddle summoned before the session. But says I to him—'Sir, I am afraid it is a case in which the session cannot interfere. Ye see she has out a king's license, and she is contributing to what they call the revenue o' the country; therefore, if she be only acting up to her regulations, I doubt we canna interfere, and that we would only bring ourselves into trouble if we did.'

"'But, Roger,' quoth he, 'her strong drink is making weak vessels of some of my parishioners. There is Thomas Elliot, and William Archbold, or Blithe Willie, as some call him for a by-word; those lads, and a dozen o' others, I am

creditably informed, are there, drinking, singing, swearing, fighting, or dancing, night after night; and even Johnny Grippy, the miser, that I would have made an elder last year but on account o' his penuriousness, is said to slip in on the edge o' his foot every morning, to swallow his dram before breakfast! I tell ye, Roger, she is bringing them to ruin faster than I can bring them to a sense o' sin—or whatever impression I may make, her liquor is washing away. She has brought a plague amongst us, and it is entering our habitations—it is thinning the sanctuary, striking down our strong men, and making mothers miserable. Therefore, unless Luckie Riddle will, in the meantime, relinquish her traffic, I think we ought in duty to prohibit her from coming forward on the next half yearly occasion.'

"I was perfectly aware that there was a vast deal o' truth in what the minister said, but I thought he was carrying the case to a length that couldna be justified; and I advised him to remember that he was a minister o' the gospel, but not of the law. So all proceedings against Mrs Riddle were stopped, and her business went on, doing much injury to the minds, bodies, purses, and families, of many in the village.

"It was nae great secret that there were folk, both in and about the town, that had small stills concealed and working about their premises, and that there wasna a night but they sent gallons o' spirits owre the hills into England; but, by some means or other, government got wit of these clandestine transactions, and the consequence was, that a gauger was sent to live in the village, and three armed soldiers were billetted on the inhabitants, who had to provide beds for them week about. Naebody cared for having men wi' swords and fire-arms in their house, and they preferred paying for their bed at Luckie Riddle's. They were regarded as spies, and their appearance caused a great commotion amongst young and old. I often feared that the spirit of murmuring would break out into open rebellion; and one morning the soldiers came down from the hills, carrying the gauger, covered wi' blood, and in a state that ye could hardly ken life in him. One o' the soldiers also was dreadfully bruised about the head, and his sword was broken through the middle. They acknowledged that they had had a terrible battle wi' a party o' smugglers, and rewards were offered for their apprehension. But, though many of our people were then making rapid strides towards depravity, there was none of them so depraved as to sell his neighbour, as Judas did his master, for a sum of money. None o' us had any great doubts about who had been in the ploy, and some o' our folk werena seen for months after; and, when inquiries were made concerning them, their friends said they were in England, or the dear kens where—places where they could have no more business than wi' the man o' the moon—but when they came back, some o' them were lamiters for life.

"The next improvement, as they called it, was the building of a strong, square, flat-roofed house, like a castle in miniature, wi' an iron-stancheled window, and an oak door that might have resisted the attack o' a battering-ram. This was intended to be a place of confinement for disorderly persons. A constable was appointed to take care of it, and it often furnished some of Luckie Riddle's customers with a night's lodgings. Persons guilty of offences were also confined there, until they could be removed to the county jail.

"The next thing that followed, certainly was an improvement, but it had its drawbacks. It was the erection of a woollen manufactory, in which a great number o' men, women, and bairns, were employed. But they were mostly strangers; for our folk were ignorant of the work, and the proprietor of the factory brought them someway from the west of England. The auld residenters were swallowed up in the influx of new comers. But it caused a great stir about the town, and gave the street quite a new appearance. The factory hadna commenced three months, when a rival establishment was set up in opposition to Luckie Riddle, and one public-house followed upon the back of another, until now we have ten of them. As a matter of course, there was a great deal of more money spent in the village; and several young lads belonging to it, that had served their time as shopkeepers in the county town, came and commenced business in it, some of them beneath their father's roof, and enlarging the bit window o' six panes—where their mother had exposed thread, biscuits, and gingerbread for sale—into a great bow-window that projected into the street, they there exhibited for sale, all that the eye could desire for dress, or the palate to pet it. Yet with an increase of trade and money, there also came an increase of crime and a laxity of morals, and vices became common among both sexes that were unheard of in my young days. Nevertheless, the evil did not come without a degree of good to counterbalance it; and, in course of time, besides the kirk, the handsome dissenting meeting-house, that ye would observe at the foot of the town, was built. Four schools, besides the parish-school, also sprang up, so that every one had education actually brought to their door; but opposition at that time, (which was very singular,) instead o' lowering, raised the price o' schooling, and he that charged highest, got the genteelest school. Then both the kirk and the meeting-house got libraries attached to them, and Luckie Riddle found the libraries by far the most powerful opposition she had had to contend wi'. Some of the youngsters, also, formed what they called a Mechanic's Institution, and they also got a library, and met for instruction after work hours; and, I declare to ye, that even callants, in a manner, became so learned, that I often had great difficulty to keep my ground wi' them; and I have actually heard some of them have the impudence to tell the dominie that taught them their letters, that he was utterly ignorant of all useful learning, and that he knew nothing of the properties of either chemistry or mechanics. When I was a youth, also, I dinna ken if there was a person in the village, save the minister, kenned what a newspaper was. Politics never were heard tell of until about the year seventy-five or eighty, but, ever since then, they have been more and more discussed, until now they have divided the whole town into parties, and keep it in a state of perpetual ferment; and now there are not less than five newspapers come from London by the post every day, besides a score of weekly ones on the Saturday. Ye see, sir, that even in my time, very great changes and improvements have taken place; and I am free to give it as my opinion, that society is more intellectual now, than it was when I first kenned it; and, upon the whole, I would say, that mankind, instead of degenerating, are improving. I recollect, that even the street there, ye couldna get across it in the winter season, without lairing knee-deep in a dub; and now ye see, it is all what they call Macadamized, and as firm, dry, and durable, as a sheet of iron. In fact, sir, within the last forty years, the improvements and changes in this village alone are past all belief—and the alterations in the place are nothing to what I have seen and heard of the ups and downs, and vicissitudes of its inhabitants."

The patriarch having finished his account of the village, thus proceeded with the history of the individuals after whom the stranger had inquired.

THE LAIRD.

"Ye have asked me if auld Laird Cochrane be still living at the Ha', which, for three centuries, was the glory and pride of his ancestors. Listen, sir, and ye shall hear concerning him. He was born and brought up amongst us, and for many years he was a blessing to this part of the country The good he did was incalculable. He was owner of two thousand acres of as excellent land as ye would have found on all the Borders; and I could have defied ony man to hear a poor mouth made throughout the whole length and breadth of his estate. His tenants were all happy, weel-to-do, and

content. There wasna a murmur amongst them, nor amongst all his servants. He was a landlord amongst ten thousand. He was always devising some new scheme or improvement to give employment to the poor; and he would as soon have thought of taking away his own life as distressing a tenant. But the longest day has an end, and so had the goodness and benevolence of Laird Cochrane.

"It will be eight-and-twenty years ago, just about this present time, that he took a sort of back-going in his health, and somebody got him advised to go to a place in the south, that they call Tunbridge Wells—one of the places where people, that can afford annually to have fashionable complaints, go to drink mineral waters. He would then be about fifty-two years of age; and the distress of both auld and young in the village was very great at his departure. Men, women, and children, accompanied him a full mile from the porter's lodge, and when his carriage drove away, there was not one that didna say—'Heaven bless you!' On the Sabbath also, our minister, Mr Anderson, prayed for him very fervidly.

"Weel, we heard no more about the laird, nor how the waters agreed wi' his stomach, for the space of about two months, when, to our surprise, a rumour got abroad that he was on the eve of being married. Some folk laughed at the report, and made light of it; but I did no such thing, for I remembered the proverb, that—'An auld fool is the worst of all fools.' But, to increase our astonishment, cart-loads of furniture, and numbers of upholsterers, arrived from Edinburgh, and the housekeeper and butler received orders to have everything in readiness, in the best manner, for the reception of their new leddy! There was nothing else talked about in the village for a fortnight, and, I believe, nothing else dreamed about. A clap of thunder bursting out on a new year's morning, ushering in the year, and continuing for a day without intermission, could not have surprised us more. There were several widows and auld maids in the parish, that the laird allowed so much a-year to, and their dinner every Sunday and Wednesday from the Ha' kitchen, and they, poor creatures, were in very great distress about the matter. They were principally auld or feckless people, and they were afraid that if their benefactor should stop his bounty, that they would be left to perish. Whether they judged by their own dispositions or not, it is not for me to say; but certain it is, that one and all of them were afraid that his marrying a wife would put an end both to their annuities and the dinners which they received twice a-week from his kitchen.

"I dinna suppose that there was a great deal the matter wi' the laird when he went to Tunbridge Wells—like many others, he wasna weel from having owre little to do. But he had not been there many days, when his fancy was attracted by a dashing young leddy, of four or five-and-twenty, the daughter of a gentleman who was a dignitary in the church, but who lived up to and rather beyond his income, so that when he should die, his gay family, of whom he had four daughters, would be left pennyless. The name of the laird's intended was Jemima, and she certainly was a pretty woman, and what ye would call a handsome one; but there was a haughtiness about her looks, and a boldness in her carriage, which were far from being becoming in a woman. Her looks and carriage, however, were not her worst fault. She had been taken to the Wells by her mamma, as she termed her mother, for the express purpose of being exhibited—much after the same manner as cattle are exhibited at a fair—to see whether any bachelor or widower would make proposals. Our good laird was smitten sighed, was accepted, and sealed the marriage contract

"The marriage took place immediately, but he didna arrive at the Ha' wi' his young wife till the following June. When they did arrive, her faither, the divine, was wi' them, and within a week there was a compl te overturning of the whole establishment, from head to foot. They came in two speck-and-span-new carriages, shining like the sun wi' silver ornaments. They brought also a leddy's-maid wi' them that wore her veils, and her frills, and her fal-de-rals; and the housekeeper declared, that, for the first eight days, she didna ken her mistress from the maid; for Miss imitated Madam, and both took such airs upon themselves, that the auld body was confounded, and curtsied to both without distinction, for fear of making a mistake. They also brought a man-servant wi' them, that couldna speak a word like a Christian, nor utter a word but in some heathenish foreign tongue. Within a week the auld servants were driven about from the right hand to the left, and from the left to the right. The incomers ordered them to do this, and to do that, wi' as much insolence and authority, as if he had been a lord and she a lady.

"But, in a short time, the leddy discovered that all the auld domestics, from the housekeeper and butler down to the scullion wench, some of whom had been in the house for twenty years, were little better than a den of thieves; and, at the Martinmas term, a new race of servants took possession of the Ha'. But this was not the only change which her young leddyship and her father brought about within a few weeks. Her nerves could not stand the smell of vegetables, which arose from the kitchen when the broth was cooking for the widows and their families, the auld maidens, and other helpless persons in the village and neighbourhood, on the Sundays and Wednesdays, and she gave orders that the *nuisance* should be discontinued. Thus, sir, for the sake of the gentility and delicacy of her leddyship' organ of smelling, forty stomachs were left twice a-week to yearn with hunger. At that time the labouring men on the estate had seven shillings a-week, with liberty to keep a cow to graze in the plantations; and those that dwelt by the river side kept ducks and geese, all of which were great helps to them. But her leddyship had an aversion to horned cattle. She never saw them, she said, but she dreamed of them, and to dream of them was to dream of an enemy! The laird endeavoured to laugh her out of such silly notions, and appealed to her father, the dignitary and divine, to prove that belief in dreams was absurd. His reverence agreed that it was ridiculous to place faith in dreams, but he hinted that there were occasions when the wishes of a wife, though a little extravagant, and perhaps absurd, ought to be complied with; and he also stated, that he himself had seen the cattle in question rubbing against the young trees, and nibbling the tender twigs; besides, there were walks through the plantations, and, as there might be running cattle amongst them, he certainly thought, with his daughter, that the grazing in the woods ought to be discontinued. His authority was decisive. Next day, the steward was commanded to issue an order, that every cotter upon the estate must either sell his cow, or pay for its grass to a farmer.

"This was a sad blow to the poor hedgers and ditchers, and those that work with the spade. There was mourning that day in many a cottage—it was equal to taking a meal a-day off every family. But the change that was taking place in their condition did not end there. The divine, like another great and immortal member of the sacred profession—the illustrious Paley—was fond of angling; but there the resemblance between them stopped. I have said that he was fond of angling—but he was short-sighted, and one of the worst fishers that ever cracked off a hook, or raised a splash in the water. Once, when he might have preached upon the text, that he 'had toiled all day and caught nothing he was fishing on the river, about a mile above where we now are, when he perceived the geese and ducks of a cottager, swimming and diving their heads in the stream. It immediately occurred to the wise man, that his want of success arose from the geese and ducks destroying all the fish!—and he forthwith prevailed upon his son-in-

law to order his tenants to part with their poultry. This was another sair blow to the poor cottagers, and was the cause of their bairns gaun bare-legged in winter, and hungry in summer. The gardens, the avenues, the lodge, every thing about the place was altered. But, to crown all, the lease of three or four of the laird's tenants was out at the following Martinmas, and their rents were doubled. Every person marvelled at the change in the conduct and character of the laird. Some thought he had gone out of his wits, and others that he was possessed by the Evil One; but the greater part thought, like me, that he was a silly, henpecked man.

"A few months after her leddyship arrived, she gave birth to a son and heir, and there were great rejoicings about the Ha' on the occasion, but very little upon the estate; for already it had become a place that every one saw it would be desirable to leave as soon as possible. As the young birkie grew up, he soon gave evidence of being a sad 'scape-grace. Never a day passed but we heard of his being in some ploy or other; and his worthy mother said, that it shewed a spirit becoming his station in life. Before he had reached man's estate, he was considered to be a great proficient in horse-racing, cock-fighting, fox-hunting, gambling, and other gentlemanly amusements; but as to learning, though he had been at both school and college, I dinna suppose that there is a trade's lad connected wi' the Mechanics' Institution here, that he was fit to haud the candle to. His grandfather, the divine, sometimes lectured him about the little attention which he paid to his learning, but the yonng hopeful answered, that—'There was no necessity for a gentleman, who was heir to five or six thousand a-year, and whose father was seventy years of age, boring over books.'

"They generally resided in London, and were never about the Ha', save during a month or two in the shooting season We heard, however, that they had fine carryings on in the great city; that they kept up a perpetual course of routing parties, and assemblies—that the estate was deeply mortgaged; and the laird, from the course of dissipation into which he had been dragged, had sunk into premature dotage. It was even reported, that Johnny Grippy, the miser, had advanced several thousand pounds upon the estate, at a very exorbitant interest.

"At length their course of extravagance, like a lang tether, came to an end. Creditors grew numerous and clamorous; they would have their money, and nothing but their money would satisfy them. The infatuated auld laird sought refuge in the Abbey at Holyrood; and his son went on racing about and gambling as formerly, borrowing money from John Grippy when down here, and from Jews when in London, and giving them promises and securities that would make the estate disappear, when it came into his possession, like snow in summer. Her leddyship came down to the Ha', and, to my certain knowledge, was refused credit for twenty shillings in a shop in the village here, which was then kept by a son of one of the cotters, that she and her faither had caused to part wi' their kye, and their poultry. This was what the young man called—'seeing day about wi' her leddyship.'

"The auld laird hadna been twelve months in the Abbey, when, finding himself utterly deserted by his wife and son, he sank into despondency, and died in misery; rueing, I will make free to say, that ever he had set his foot in Tunbridge Wells. His young successor, in gratitude to his mother for her over indulgence, and the example she had set him, turned her from the Ha' on his taking possession of it, and left her to seek refuge in the house of her father, the divine; and we never heard of her in this part of the country again. The career and end of the young laird I will state to ye, as I notice the histories of the Minister, and ne'er-do-weel Tam. And now for that of

THE MINISTER.

"A more excellent, worthy, and sincere man than Mr Anderson, never entered a pulpit, or preached words of hope and consolation to sinners. He was not a flowery orator, or a fashionable preacher; but he was plain, simple, nervous, earnest. His homeliness and anxious sincerity, rivetted the attention of the most thoughtless; and, as a poet says—

'They who came to scoff, remained to pray.'

I remember when he was first placed amongst us as minister of the parish, he was a mere youngster, but as primitive in his manners as if he had just come from the plough instead of a college. His faither was a farm-steward upon the estate of the then member for the county; and the patronage being in the crown—as it is called—it was through the interest of the member that he got the kirk. About twelve months after he was placed, he took a wife, and his marriage gave great satisfaction to the whole congregation at least to the poor and middle classes, who, of course, were the great majority. And the reason why his marriage gave such satisfaction was, that his wife was the daughter of a poor hind, that he had taken a liking to, when he was but a laddie and her a lassie; and he had promised her, when they came from the harvest field together, (for while he was at the college, he always wrought in the harvest time,) that, if he lived, and was spared to be a minister, she should be his wife. I am sorry to say that such promises are owre often neglected by young people, when either the one or the other of them happens to get their head up in the world. But our minister thereby shewed, that his heart was actuated by right principles, and that he perferred happiness to every mercenary consideration. It shewed, that he was desirous of domestic comfort, and not ambitious of worldly aggrandizement She was a bonny, quiet, discreet creature; and, if she hadna what ye may call the manners of a leddy, yet her modesty and good nature lent an air of politeness to every thing she did. Her constant desire to please, far more than counterbalanced for her want of being what is called weel-bred; and if she had not gentility, she had what is of more importance in a preacher's wife—a pious mind, a cheerful and charitable disposition, and a meek spirit; and whatever she was ignorant of, there was one thing she was acquainted with—she

'Knew her Bible true.'

But, after their marriage, he took great pains in instructing her in various branches of learning; and in that she made great proficiency, I am qualified to give evidence—for, when I have been present at the dinners after the sacramental occasions, I have heard her dispute wi' the ministers upon points of divinity, history, and other matters, and maintain her ground very manfully, if I may say it.

"I believe that a happier couple were not to be found in Great Britain. She bore unto him fourteen children, but of these, all, save two, a boy and a girl, died in infancy; and in giving birth to the last, the mother perished. It was on a Sunday that she died; and I remember that, on the following Sabbath, her widowed husband entered the pulpit to preach her funeral sermon. His text was—'Why should we mourn as those who have no hope?' He proceeded with his discourse, but every few minutes he paused, he sobbed—the big tears ran down his cheeks, and all the congregation wept with him. At last he quoted the words—'In the morning I preached to the people, and in the evening my wife died!' His heart filled—the tears gushed from his eyes—he could say no more—he sank down on the seat and covered his face with his hands. Two of the elders went up to the pulpit, and led him to the Manse; and the precentor, of his own accord, giving out a psalm, the congregation sang it and dispersed.

"I have mentioned to ye his two surviving bairns—the name of the laddi was Edward, and of the lassie, Esther

* Absurd as this may be, it is yet

Edward was several years older than his sister; and, from his youth upwards, he was a bold, sprighely, fearless callant. Often have I observed him playing the part of a captain, and drilling the laddies of the village into squares and lines, like a little army; and as often have I heard him say, that he would be nothing but a sodger. His faither (as every Christian ought to do) regarded war as a great wickedness, and as an abomination that disgraced the earth; he, therefore, was grieved to see the military bent of his son's inclination, and did everything in his power to break him from it. He believed, and correctly too, that Edward had too much pride to enter the army as a common soldier, where he would be little better than a slave, and have to lift his hat to every puppy that wore an epaulette on his shoulder or a sash round his waist. The minister, therefore, was resolved that he would not advance the money to buy his son a commission.

"Here I must notice Johnny Grippy, who had never been kenned to perform a generous action in the whole course of his existence. He was a man that, if he had parted wi' a bawbee, to save a fellow-creature from starvation, wadna, through vexation, have sleeped again for a week. If ony body had pleaded poverty to him, he would have asked them—'What right they had to be poor?' It would have been more difficult for him to answer—'What right he had to be rich?' Johnny never forgave Mr Anderson for prohibiting him from being made an elder; and, in his own quiet, but cruel way, he said he would see that he got satisfaction, to the last plack, for the insult. Now, what do ye think the miser did? He absolutely offered young Maister Edward money to buy an ensign's commission, at the moderate interest of ten per cent., and on the understanding that he would gie him four years' credit for the interest, and that he wadna request the principal until he was made a captain. This proposal was made for the sole and individual purpose of grieving and afflicting Mr Anderson, and of being revenged on him. The silly laddie, dazzled wi' the bright sword, and the gold-laced coat of an officer, and thinking it a grand thing to be a soldier—fancying himself a general, a hero, a conqueror in a hundred fights—swallowed the temptation, took the offered money on the conditions agreed to; and through the assistance of a college acquaintance, the son of a member of parliament, purchased a commission in a foot regiment. All this was done without his father's knowledge; and when John Grippy witnessed the good man's tears as he parted with his son, his cold heart rejoiced that his revenge had been so far successful, and for once he regretted not having parted with his money without a sure bond being made doubly sure.

"In a very few weeks after Edward Anderson joined his regiment, he accompanied it abroad; and twelve months had not passed, when the public papers contained an account of his having been promoted to the rank of lieutenant on the field, on account of his bravery.

"But listen, sir, to what follows.—It was on our fast-day, that the news arrived concerning a great victory in the Indies. We were all interested in the tidings, and the more particularly, as we knew that our minister's son was at the battle. His faither and his sister were in a state of great anxiety concerning him, for whether he was dead or living, they could not tell. The weather was remarkably fine, and as a great preacher was to serve some of the tables, and preach during the afternoon's service, the kirk was crowded almost to suffocation, and it was found necessary to perform the ordinances in the open air. A green plot, in front of the Manse, was chosen for the occasion, and which was capable of accommodating two or three thousand people. It was a grand sight to see such a multitude sitting on the green sward, singing the praises of their Maker, wi' the great heavens aboon them for a canopy! its very glory and immensity rendering them incapable of appreciating its unspeakable magnificence, and rendering as less than the dust in the balance, the temples of men's hands. It reminded me of the days of the Covenant, when the pulpit was a mountain side, and its covering a cloud. Mr Anderson was a man whose very existence seemed linked wi' affection for his family. He had had great affection in it, and every death seemed to transfer the love that he had borne for the dead, in a stronger degree towards those that were left. His soul was built up in them. All the congregation observed that he was greatly agitated various times during his discourse. It was evident to all, that apprehensions for the fate of his son were forcing themselves upon his thoughts

"The postman at that time brought the letters from the next town every day about one o'clock. Mr Anderson was serving the first table, and his face was towards the Manse, when the postman, approaching the door, waved his hand towards Miss Esther, who sat near it, as much as to say that he had a letter from her brother. The faither's voice failed through agitation and anxiety, as he saw the letter in the postman's hand, and abruptly concluding his exhortation, he sat down trembling, while his eyes remained as if fixed upon the letter. I, myself, observed as the postman passed me wi' it in his hand, that it was sealed wi' black. I regarded it as a fatal omen, and I at first looked towards the minister to see whether he had observed it; but, I believe that his eyes were so blinded wi' tears that he could not perceive it; and I then turned round towards Miss Esther, who I observed hastening to take the letter in her hand. At the sight of the black seal, she almost fainted upon the ground; and I saw the poor thing shaking as a leaf that quivers in the wind. But when, wi' a hurried and trembling hand, she had broken the seal, she hadna read three lines until the letter dropped upon the ground, and, clasping her hands together, wi' a wild heart-piercing scream, that sounded wildly through the worship of the people, she exclaimed—'My brother!—my brother!' and fell wi' her face upon the ground. The spectators raised her in their arms. Her faither's heart could hold no longer. He rushed through the multitude—he snatched up the fatal letter. It bore the post-mark of Bengal, but it was not the hand-writing of his son. He, too, seemed to read but a line, when he smote his hand upon his forehead, and exclaimed in agony—'My son! my son!—my poor Edward!'

"His gallant boy was one of those who were slain and buried upon the field; and the letter, which was from his colonel, recorded his courage, his virtues, and his death! All the people rose, and sorrow and sympathy seemed on every conntenance save one—and that was the face of the auld miser and hypocrite, Johnny Grippy. The body seemed actually to glut, wi' a malicious delight, over the misery and affliction of which he, in a measure, had been the cause; and, though he did try to screw his mouth into a form of pity or compassion, and squeezed his een together to make them water, I more than once observed the twittering strerk of satisfaction and delight pass owre his cheeks, just as ye have seen the shadow of a swift cloud pass owre a field of waving grain. I hated the auld miser for his very looks and his attempted hypocrisy; and, forgive me for saying so, but I believe, if at that moment it had been in my power to have annihilated him, I would have done it. The man who does the work of iniquity openly or through error, I would pray for; but he that does it beneath the mask of virtue or religion, I would exterminate

"It was many weeks before Mr Anderson was able to resume his place in the pulpit again; and his daughter, also, took the death of her brother greatly to heart. The whole parish sought to condole wi' them, not even excepting young Laird Cochrane of the Ha', who had not then come to the estate. I firmly believe, sir, that he was a predestinated villain from his cradle, for he shewed symptoms of the most disgusting depravity more early than ever laddie did. The

aulder he grew, when he was in the country, he went the more about the Manse, and Esther was nearly about his own age. She was a lassie that I would call the very perfection of loveliness—simple, artless, confiding, but not without a sprinkling o' woman's vanity. There was a laddie, the son of Thomas Elliot, or Neer-do-weel Tam, as he was commonly called, that was very fond of her; he was a fine, deserving callant, and all the town thought that she was fond of him. But the young laird put himself forward as his rival, and the one was rich and the other poor. The laird of the Ha' sent daily presents of geese, turkies, and all sorts of game in their season to the Manse; and he also presented rings, trinkets, and other fine things to Esther; while the other, who was considered a sort of poet in the neighbourhood, could only say, as a sang that I hear them singing now-a-days, says—

'My heart and lute are all my store,
And these I bring to thee.'

The laird was also an adept in flattery, in its most cunningly devised forms. Now, sir, it is amazing what an effect the use of such means will ultimately produce upon the best regulated minds. They are like the constant dropping that weareth away a stone. Though unconscious of it herself, Esther, who was but a young thing, began to listen, with more patience, to the addresses of the heir of the Ha'; and she occasionally exhibited something like dryness and petulance in the presence of poor Alexander Elliot—for such was his name. At the very first shadow of change upon her countenance, his spirit became bitter wi' jealousy, and he rashly charged her wi' deserting him for the sake of the young laird and the estate to which he was heir. This was a tearing asunder of the silken cords, that for years had held their hearts together. He was proud, and so was she—they became distrustful of each other, and at length they quarrelled, and parted never to meet again. I have heard it said, that it was partly to be revenged on Alexander that Esther gave an ear to the addresses of the laird; but that is a subject on which I offer no opinion. All that I know is, that Alexander enlisted, and went out to join his regiment in the West Indies. The laird followed Esther like her shadow; and every one, save myself, said that there would be a marriage between them. Even her worthy faither seemed to dream in the golden delusion; and, I am sorry to say, that I believe he was in no small degree the cause of finally breaking off the intimacy between her and Alexander Elliot. She was, as I have informed ye, a sensitive, confiding lassie; and the laird, who had a honied tongue, succeeded not only, in the long run, in gaining her affections, but in making her to believe in his very looks; for being incapable of falsehood herself, she did not suspect it in others, and least of all in those who had obtained a place in her heart.

"The young villain went so far as, in her presence, to ask her faither's consent to their marriage; and the auld laird being then dead, the minister agreed. It was not long after this, that the 'scape-grace went to London, and Esther began to droop like a flower nipped wi' a frost. Half-a-dozen times in the day her faither found her in tears, and he endeavoured to comfort and to cheer her; but his efforts were unavailing. It pained his heart, which had already been sorely chastened by affliction, to behold the youngling, and last of his flock, pining away before him. The young laird neither returned nor wrote, and he suspected not the cause of his daughter's grief. The first hint he got of it, was from his elders assembled in session. The old man in agony, fell back—he gasped, he smote his breast, and tore his grey hairs. In his agony he cried, that his Maker had forsaken him! The elders sought to condole wi' him, but it was in vain; he was carried to the Manse, and he never preached more. His heart was broken, and, before a month passed, the thread of life snapped also.

"Wi' the weight of her own shame and sorrow, and her faither's death, poor Esther became dementit. About nine weeks after her faither's funeral, she gave birth to a still-born child; and it was a happy thing, that the infant and its mother were buried at the same time, in the same grave.

"Such, sir, is all that it is necessary for me to inform ye concerning our late worthy minister; and, of the young laird ye shall hear more presently, in the history of

NE'ER-DO-WEEL TAM.

"I never kenned a lad that I entertained a higher regard for than Thomas Elliot. His faither left him fifteen hundred pounds, laid out upon a mortgage at five per cent. interest, and bequeathed, in such a way, that he couldna lift the principal. There was a vast deal of real goodness about his heart—he was frank, liberal, sincere. Every person that kenned him liked him. His first and greatest fault was, that he was owre open; he laid bare his breast, as it were, to the attack of every enemy that chose to hurl a shaft at it. He was a fool for his pains; and, I daresay, he saw it in the end. There was always some person taking the advantage of the frankness of his disposition. But the thing that ruined him, and fixed the bye-name on him was, that he became a sort of fixture in Luckie Riddle's parlour. His chief companion was a lad of the name of William Archbold—a blithe, singing chield, that was always happy, and ready at onything. Thomas and he were courting two sisters—Jenny and Peggy Lilly—the daughters of a small farmer in the neighbourhood, and both of them were bonny, weel respected lasses. The folk in this quarter used to call William Archbold, *blithe Willie*. He was a blacksmith to his trade, but quite a youth; and come upon him by night or by day, Willie was sure to be found laughing, whistling, or singing. He hadna an yearly income like Thomas Elliot; and, strange to say, he got the blame of gieing him a howff at Luckie Riddle's. But that was a doctrine which I always protested against; and I said it was much more likely that, as Thomas was fu'-handed, while his neighbour had to work for his bread, that the man of money led the blacksmith to their howff, and not the blacksmith the man of money. One thing is certain, that both of them were far oftener at Luckie's than was either good for their health, wealth, or reputation. One night, it seems, after having drunk until, if 'they werena fu', they just had plenty,' they reeled away to see the two sisters, their sweethearts. Jenny didna wish to quarrel wi' Thomas, because he had the siller; but Peggy turned away wi' scorn from blithe William, and said, that she 'never again would speak to one who was no better than a common blackguard, and who neither had regard for himself, nor for any one connected wi' him.' What more passed between them I cannot tell, but, it is said, he turned sober in an instant; and, certain it is, that night he left the town, and has never been more heard tell off

"Thomas Elliot and Jenny were married, but she died the second year after their marriage, leaving to his charge an infant son, who was kirsened by the name of Alexander. Thomas, after his wife's death, tried many things, (for while she lived she keepit him to rights,) but he neglected them all. He began twenty things and ended nothing. He was to be found in Luckie Riddle's in the morning, and he was to be seen sitting there at night. Before he was forty, he became a perfect sot; and I used to ask—'Wha leads him away, now?' The fact was, he was miserable save when he was in company; and, for the sake of company, he would have sat sipping and drinking from sunrise to sunset, without ever perceiving that in that time he had been sitting wi' twenty different companies, each of whom had remained maybe half an hour, and left him bibbing there to make a crony of the customer that last came in. But this course of life could not last long. He had mortgaged the mortgage that his father left him, until, although he could not lift it, he had almost swallowed it up; and at the age of forty-four he fell into

the grave like a lump of diseased flesh—a thing without a soul!

"I have informed ye that he left a son, named Alexander, behind him. He was a laddie that was beloved by the whole town; and it was him that frae bairnhood was set down as the future husband of Esther Anderson, our minister's daughter. I have already told ye how he enlisted, when he fancied that she was drawing up wi' the young laird and slighting him.

"Now, mark ye, sir—for this is one of the most singular things in the history of our village—about three years after the melancholy deaths of Esther and her father, the laird, wi' a pack o' young men as thoughtless and wicked as himself, came down to the Ha'. It was plain as noon-day that the murder of a young lassie, her bairn, and her honoured father, had never cost the young libertine a thought. He returned to all his former profligacy, as a sow returns to its wallowing in the mire.

"He was returning, towards evening, with three or four of his companions from an otter-hunt, and was within a quarter of a mile of the Ha', when he was met by two strangers—the one a youth, and the other a man of middle age.

"'Stand!' cried the young man, sternly.

"'What do you want, fellow?' inquired the laird, proudly.

"'Dismount!' retorted the other, 'and take this!' presenting to him a pistol. 'I come to avenge the murder of Esther Anderson and her father!—and,' added he, 'wi' your blood to wash the bruise ye have inflicted on my wounded heart! Did ye think, because her brave brother was with the dead, that there was none left to revenge the ruin of her innocence? Beneath the very tree where we now stand, she plighted me her first vow, and we were happy as the birds that sang upon its branches, until ye, as a serpent, crossed our path. Dismount, Laird Cochrane, if ye be not coward as weel as villain!'

"'Alexander Elliot!' replied the laird, 'are ye not aware that I am a magistrate, and have power to commit ye even now as a deserter. Begone, sir, and take your hand from my horse's head, for it becomes not a gentleman to quarrel wi' such as you.'

"'Dismount! ye palsy-spirited slave!' cried Alexander, 'and choose your weapon, and your distance. Let your friends that are wi' you see that ye have fair play. Dismount! or I will shoot ye dead where ye sit!' And as he spoke he dragged him from his horse.

"It was an awful tragedy to take place in a peaceable corner of the earth like this. The stranger that accompanied Alexander took the pistols, and addressing one of the gentlemen that were wi' the laird, said cooly—'This business must be settled, sir; and the sooner the better. Choose ye one of these weapons, and let the principals take their ground.'

"They did take their ground, as it was termed, and their pistols were levelled at each other's heart. Guilt and surprise made the laird to tremble, but revenge gave steadiness to the hand of young Elliot. Both fired at the same moment, and with a sudden groan the laird fell dead upon the ground.

"Some said that the earth was weel rid of a prodigal, while others thought it an awfu' thing that he should have been cut off in such a manner, in the very middle of his iniquities and career of wickedness; and it was generally regretted that he should have fallen by the hand of a lad so universally respected as Alexander Elliot. Such, sir, was the end of the young laird, but what has become of Alexander is more than any one in these parts can tell. I have just now a few words to say concerning

JOHNNY GRIPPY.

"The Grippys were a very remarkable family, and it was a common saying, that they were weel named. There were originally three brothers of them; and when I first kenned them they were ragged, bare-legged callants, but every one of them as keen as a Jew, and as hard as a flinty rock. Two of them were in the cattle line; and, through stinginess, cheatery, and such like means, they amassed a power of money. But both of them died, and being unmarried, their brother Johnny became sole heir to their property. He was a man that would have walked ten miles to pick up a farthing. He keepit a shop, or what the Americans would call a *store*, in the village, for he sold everything, new and auld, good, bad, and indifferent—eatable and wearable, or for whatever purpose it was wanted; for everything ye could think about was to be had for money at the shop of Johnny Grippy. Of late years, it was weel ascertained that he dealt extensively in sending whisky into England, and in such a way too, that neither the dirdum, the risk, nor the loss could land at his door. But he had dealings in many concerns, both here and elsewhere. Wherever he heard of any thing by which there was money to be made, he always endeavoured to get his finger in. It was affirmed that he was connected wi' some wealthy trading companies about London, and that he had ships upon the sea. I know for a positive fact, that he went up to the great city every year, and that he actually begged his way there and back again. But it is my opinion that he made the greater part of his wealth by lending out money to usury. By this means, a great deal of property fell into his possession, for he was as cruel as a starving tiger. He was a despiser of both justice and mercy, and all he cared about was—"*I maun hae my bargain.*" That was always his answer, if ony body offered to intercede wi' him for ony poor creature that he was distressing.

"The auld knave endeavoured to cover his avarice wi' the cloak of religion and, as I have already informed ye, sought to be made an elder; and, as ye have been made aware, he never forgave our late worthy minister for the slight and disappointment, but, even against his nature, parted wi' money to obtain a cruel revenge. It would tire you, if I were to inform you of the one-thousandth part of Johnny's meanness, and the instances of his ravening avariciousness, or the misery which he caused in the habitations of both high and low. Indeed I may say, that he grew rich through the ruin of others; and he sought out objects of misery on which he might fix his devouring talons, even as a vulture seeketh out a dead carcass.

"At an enormous interest he lent money to the auld laird; and he cunningly permitted the interest to accumulate, year after year, until the laird's death. He also advanced sums to the young laird at a rate even more usurious, and got the entire title-deeds of the estate into his hands as security; and when the laird fell in the duel wi' Alexander Elliot, he seized and took possession of Ha' estate, and all that was thereon, claiming them as his! The whole parish was thunderstruck wi' astonishment.

"The next kin to the young laird threatened to throw the case into the Court of Chancery.

"'Let them,' said Johnny, laughing in his sleeve, 'they will live lang that live to see it settled there—and, *I will hae my bargain.*'

"Weel, the case was thrown into Chancery, and Johnny did not live to see it settled, for settled it is not until this day, and what some one said of eternity might be said of it—it is 'beginning to begin.'

"I think ye heard that John had acquired a habit of slipping owre to Luckie Riddle's, on the edge of his foot, for a dram before breakfast. He took a strong liking for her strong bottle, and by way of saving the expense of the dram, he left off the practice of taking a breakfast; and when the single dram increased to two and three in the day, he confined himself to one meal, and that of the poorest and scantiest kind—a potatoe and salt, or maybe a herring as a

luxury. But it was more than suspected that the potatoes on which he lived were not all honestly come by; for I myself have seen him in a field amongst other folks, stooping down and fingering at the drills, and slipping the potatoes into his coat pocket; and when asked what he was doing, he would have said, (quite collectedly, for there was no possibility of confusing him,) 'Ou, I am just looking what sort of crop such-a-one is going to have this year.'

"But the miser's love of drink increased upon him, and the more he spent on liquor the more he hungered himself. He became a living skeleton, and in the depth of a severe winter, he was found sitting dead behind his desk, with the copy of a letter before him, in which he had instructed his man of business to sell off, immediately, the husband of Peggy Lilly."

"The husband of Peggy Lilly!" interrupted the stranger, who had hitherto listened to the records of the patriarch in silence—"who was he?"

"That," resumed the old man, "seems to interest you, and wherefore I cannot divine, as I have no recollection of your face; but, if ye have patience and hearken ye shall hear all that I can tell ye of the history of

PEGGY LILLY.

"Peggy was allowed to be the bonniest lass in all the parish; but she was as prudent and sedate as she was bonny, and everybody wondered that she keepit company wi' William Archbold sae lang as she did, after he had gien himsel' up to a habit o' dissipation. Though she, perhaps, thocht as I did, that it was mere thochtlessness in the young man, that he was jist drawn awa by his friend Thomas Elliot, and that, if he were married, he would reform. Luckie Riddle's sign, however, was a black sicht to him, and I doot it has been a heart-sore to puir Peggy. The difference that the subject gave rise to between them, was perhaps unlucky for the happiness o' baith parties. In the vexation o' the moment, she uttered words o' harshness which her heart did not dictate, and, in leaving as he did, he acted rashly.

"When we heard, however, of William Archbold's having left the town, and the cause o' his leaving, (that it arose from Peggy having spoken to him as if disgusted at his conduct,) we laughed and said he would soon come back again. She thought the same thing; but weeks and months succeeded each other, and now five-and-twenty years have passed, and the lad has been no more heard of. How deeply Peggy grieved for her conduct, and mourned his absence, was visible in her countenance.

"About ten years after her sister's death, her parents, who had both become very frail, were thrown out of their bit farm, after several very unfortunate seasons in it, and they were left entirely dependent upon her exertions for their support. They were reduced to very great straits, and many a time it was a wonder to me how they lived; but late and early did she toil for their maintenance; and, poor hizzy, the sorrow that fell upon her face, for the loss of William Archbold, never left it.

"At that time a very decent man, who had taken a small farm in the neighbourhood, began to pay attention to her, and often called at her faither's house. She heard his request, that she would marry him, wi' a sigh—for she hadna forgotten Blithe Willie. But her faither and mither looked at her, wi' the tears in their een, and they besought her night and day, that they might see her settled and provided for. She at length yielded to their solicitations, and gied him her hand; but she was candid enough to confess to him, that her affection couldna accompany it, though her respect and duty should.

"So far as the world could judge, they seemed to live happily together, and Peggy made an exemplary wife; but there was always like a quiet settled melancholy on her countenance. Their farm was too dear taken, and about a year after they were married, it became the property of Johnny Grippy. Ye have already heard what sort of man he was, reaping where he had not sown. He exacted his rent to the last farthing, or without ceremony paid himself double from the stock upon the farm.

"Peggy's husband became unable, though he struggled early and late, to make up his rent, and having fought until his strength was exhausted, and his health and heart broken, he sank down upon his bed, a dying man; and Johnny, causing the sheriff's officer to seize all that was upon the farm, made them seize also the very bed upon which the dying man lay. He, in fact, died in their hands, and Peggy was turned out upon the world, a friendless widow, with two helpless infants at her knee; and a sore, sore fight she has had, to get the bite and the sup for them, poor things, from that day to this."

"But," replied the stranger with emotion, "there is one left who will provide for her and her children."

"Who may that be?" inquired the patriarch.

"William Archbold;" answered the other.

"Preserve us!" said the old man in surprise; "I daresay I have been blind not to have recognised ye before—ye are William!"

"I am," replied the other; "Blithe Willie, as you once termed me. Peggy's cutting and just rebuke roused my pride, and filled me with self-abasement at the same instant. In a state of mind bordering on madness I left the village, where I considered my character to be blasted for ever. I went to London, and there engaged to go out to India. I was there fortunate in business, and in a few years became rich. I there, some years ago, discovered Alexander Elliot, (the son of my old companion,) whose regiment had gone to the East and not to the West Indies as you supposed. I purchased his discharge, and employed him as a clerk. He requested permission to visit this country, and it was granted; but I knew not the deadly nature of his errand. It was during that visit that he so fatally avenged the ruin of poor Esther. He is again in India, and prospering. But you say that Peggy has been married, that she is a widow ——a widow."

"Yes, a widow, sir," answered the patriarch; "and if ye be single, I think ye canna do better than make her a wife."

"No! no!" said William, drawing his hand across his eyes, "I cannot, I will not glean where another has reaped. But here is a bank order for five hundred pounds, let it be conveyed to her, but let her never know the hand from whence it came."

"Hoots! nonsense, Maister William," said the old man, "see her again for auld langsyne at ony rate, and gie her it yersel'."

What course William Archbold would have adopted I cannot tell, but at that moment Peggy passed down the street, and spoke to the old man as she passed. William started to his feet, he stretched out his hand, he exclaimed —"Peggy!"

She was speechless—tears gushed into her eyes. Old love, it is said, soon kindles again. Be this as it may, within six weeks Peggy left the village in a coach as the wife of William Archbold and her children accompanied her.



WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE WHITSOME TRAGEDY.

When our forefathers were compelled to give up the ancient practice of crossing the Borders, and of seizing and driving home whatever cattle they could lay their hands upon, without caring or inquiring who might be their owner—in order to supply their necessities, both as regarded providing themselves with cattle and with articles of wearing apparel, they were forced to become buyers or sellers at the annual and other fairs on both sides of the Border. Hence, they had, as we still have, the fairs of Stagshawbank, Whitsunbank, St Ninian's, St James', and St Boswell's; with the fairs of Wooler, Dunse, Chirnside, Swinton, and of many other towns and villages. Of the latter, several fell into disuse; and that of Whitsome was discontinued. Whitsome, or *White's home,* is the name of a village and small agricultural parish in the Merse, which is bounded by the parishes of Swinton, Ladykirk, Edrom, and Hutton. Now, as has been stated, Whitsome, in common with many other villages, enjoyed the privilege of having held at it an annual fair. But, though the old practice of lifting cattle, and of every man taking what he could, had been suppressed, the laws were not able to extinguish the ancient Border spirit which produced such doings; and, at the annual fairs, it often broke forth in riot, and terminated in blood. It was in consequence of one of those scenes, and in order to suppress them, that the people of Whitsome were deprived of a fair being held there; the particulars whereof, in the following story, will be unfolded.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, there resided upon the banks of the Till, and a few miles above its junction with the Tweed, a widow of the name of Barbara Moor. She had had seven sons; but they and her husband had all fallen in the troubles of the period, and she was left bereaved, desolate, and without a comforter. Many said that affliction had turned her brain; but even before she was acquainted with days of sorrow or with nights of lamentation, there was often a burning wildness in her words, and her manners were not as those of other women. There was a tinge of extravagance, and a character of vehemence, in all her actions. Some of her neighbours sympathised with her, because of the affliction that rendered her hearth desolate; but the greater part beheld her with reverential respect, or looked upon her with fear and trembling, believing her to be leagued with the inhabitants of the invisible world, and familiar with the moon and stars, reading in their courses the destinies of nations and of individuals as in a book. The character of a being who could read the decrees of fate, and even in some instances control the purposes of men, was certainly that which she seemed most pleased to assume; and its wildness soothed her troubled thoughts, or directed them into other channels.

In her youth, and before her father had been compelled to bow his head to the authority of the wardens of the marches, she had resided in a castellated building, of greater strength than magnitude; one of the minor strongholds on the Border, and which might have been termed towers for the protection of stolen cattle. But, when the two nations came beneath the sovereignty of one monarch, and the spear of war was transformed into a pruning-hook there went forth a decree, that the strongholds, great and small, along the Borders, should be destroyed; and amongst those that were rendered defenceless and uninhabitable, was the turret which, for many generations, had been occupied by the ancestors of Barbara Moor. During the lifetime of her husband, she had resided in a comfortable-looking farm-house the appearance of which indicated that its inhabitants were of a more peaceful character than were those, who, a few years before, had occupied the prison-like houses of strength. She now resided in a small mud-built and turf-covered hovel, which in winter afforded but a sorry shelter from the "pelting of the pitiless storm."

But Barbara was used to bear the scorching sun of summer, and the cold and storms of winter. She walked in the midst of the tempest, and bowed not her head; and she held converse with the wild lightning and the fierce hail, speaking of them as the ministers of her will. For nearly nine months every year she was absent from her clay-built hovel and none knew whither she wandered.

It is necessary, however, for the developement of our story, that we here make further mention of her husband and her sons. The elder Moor had been a daring freebooter in his youth; and often, in the morning, and even at dead of night, the "fray of support," the cry for help, and the sudden summons for neighbours and kinsmen to rise and ride, were raised wheresoever he trode; and the sleuth-hounds were let loose upon his track. It was his boast that he dared to ride farther to humble an enemy, than any other reiver on either side of the Border. If he saw, or if he heard, of a herd of cattle or a flock of sheep to his liking, he immediately "marked it for his own," and seldom failed in securing it; and though the property so obtained was not purchased with money, it was often procured with a part of his own blood—and with the blood, and not unfrequently the lives, of his friends, followers, and relatives. And when law and justice became stronger than the reiver's right, they by no means tamed his spirit. Though necessity then compelled him to be a buyer and seller of cattle, he looked upon the occupation and the necessity as a disgrace, and he sighed for the honoured and happier days of his youth, when the freebooter's might was the freebooter's right. His sons were young men deeply imbued with his spirit; and it was their chiefest pleasure, during the long winter evenings, to sit and listen to him, while he recorded the exploits and the hair-breadth escapes of his early days. He frequently related to them strange adventures and contests, which he had in his youth with one Walter Cunningham, who resided near Simprin, in Berwickshire, and who was not only regarded as a wealthy man, but as one of the boldest on the Borders. He had often boasted of the number of his herds, and defied the stoutest heart in Northumberland to lay hand upon their horns. The elder Moor had heard this defiance; and being resolved to prove that he had both a hand and a heart to put the defiance to the test, the following is one of the adventures which he related to his sons, in connection therewith:—

"It was about the Martinmas," he said, "when the leaves were becoming few and blighted on the trees; I was courting your mother at the time, and her faither had consented to our marriage; but, at the same time, he half cast up to me, that I had but an ill-plenished house to take home a wife to—that I had neither meal in the press, kye in the byre, nor

oxen in the court-yard. His own mailing was but poorly provided at the time; and had he looked at hame, he hardly would have ventured to throw a reflection at me.

"'Weel, sir,' said I to him, 'I dinna deny but what you say is true; but I have supple heels, a ready hand, a good sword, and a stout heart, and I ken a canny byre, where there are threescore of sleak beasties, weel worth the harrying.'

"'Now ye speak like a lad of sense and mettle,' said the old man; 'and on the first night that ye bring them hame, the plumpest and the fattest o' them shall be slaughtered for the marriage-feast of you and Barbara.'

"Then up spoke your mother's brother, and a winsome young man he was, as ye would have found between Tweed and Tyne; and 'Jonathan,' says he to me, 'when ye gang to drive hame the herd, I shall go wi' thee, for the sake of a bout with the bold, bragging Cunningham, of Simprin—for I will lay thee my sword 'gainst a tailor's bodkin, it is him ye mean.'

"'It is him, Duncan,' said I—for your uncle's name was Duncan—'though weel do I ken that he keeps them strongly guarded, and blood will flow, and weapons be broken, before we get them into our possession. But gie me your hand, my lad—we two shall be a match for him and a' his backing. What ye take shall be your own, and what I take, your sister's; and your faither shanna cast up my toom bink and my ill-stocked mailing.'

"'Weel spoken, bairns!' cried your grandfaither, who had been a first hand at such ploys in his young days; 'weel-spoken! I'm glad to see that the spirits of the young generation arena gaun backward; though, since King Jamie gaed to be King in London, as weel as at Edinburgh, our laws are only fit for a few women, and everything is done that can be done to banish manhood, and make it a crime.'

"'Go upon no such an errand,' said your mother to both of us; 'for there is blood upon baith your brows, and there is death in your path.'

"'Havers, lassie!' cried her faither angrily; 'are ye at your randering again?—what blood do ye see on their brows, mair than I do, or what death can ye perceive in their path? All your mother's Highland kinsfolk were never able to throw their second-sighted glamour into my een, and my own bairn shanna do it.'

"'Call it randers, or what ye will, answered she; 'but I see it plain as I see the grey hairs upon your head, that death and lamentation are gathering round my father's hearth, and are hovering and screaming owre it, like vultures round a desolate place.'

"Her words made my flesh to creep upon my bones; for, both before that, and a hundred times since, I have heard her say dark and strange things, which sooner or later have owre truly come to pass. However, the foray across to Simprin was delayed till after our marriage; and your mother almost persuaded me to give up all thoughts of it, and instead of my former habits of life, to cultivate the bit ground which my forefaithers had held for two hundred years, for the consideration of an armed man's service. But her brother taunted me, and said I was no better than Samson lying wi' his head on the lap of Dalilah, and that I had not only given his sister my heart to keep, but my courage also. A taunt was a thing that I never could endure, and that I never would put up wi' from any man that ever was born—and I hope none of ye ever will, or, as I am your faither! ye should be no longer my sons!

"'Weel, this night be it,' said I to your uncle. 'The Tweed will be fordable at Norham—I will have my shelty and weapons ready precisely at eleven, and get two friends to accompany us that I can trust. Do ye the like, and we shall see whose courage will stand firmest before morning.'

"We gave each other our hands upon it, and said it was a bargain, and immediately set about making preparations for the excursion. Before the appointed hour, he rode up to my door, accompanied by two of his faither's servants; and I with my two friends were in readiness waiting for him. Your mother was very bitter against our purpose, and her words and her warnings made my very heart to shake within my breast. Her eyes flashed, as if they had been balls of fire, and her very bosom heaved up and down wi' agitation.

"'Husband!—brother!' she cried, 'listen to me, and give up the mad errand on which ye are bent; for the blood-hound is snuffing the air and gnashing its teeth, and the hooded crow clapping its wings for a feast, and the owl has looked east, west, north, and south, from the auld turret—it has screamed wi' joy, and its eyes are fixed on Simprin! Be wise—be warned—or the moon will set and the sun rise upon unburied bones. Cunningham of Simprin is strong and powerful; he is strong wi' men, he is strong wi' money; and his herds and his hirsels are strongly guarded. Again I say to ye, be wise—be warned—desist!—or auld men will tear their grey hairs, and wives mourn; and those only that live by the gibbet, rejoice wi' the bloodhound, and bird of prey!'

"Her words made us both uncomfortable; but we had often been engaged in such exploits, before the expedition was determined on; and we couldna, in the presence of the four men that we had engaged to accompany us, abandon it. They were fearless and experienced hands at the trade; but the new laws on the Borders had reduced them to great privations, and their teeth were watering for the flesh-pots of bygone days, no matter at what risk they were to be obtained.

"It was a delightful moonlight night—almost as bright as day; the moon's brightness put out the stars, and not aboon a dozen were visible, though there wasna half that number of clouds in the whole heavens, and they were just like white sheets, that spirits might be sleeping on in the air! We proceeded by way of Twisel to Norham, where we crossed the Tweed to Ladykirk; and as at midnight we passed by the auld kirkyard, I believe I actually put my hands to my ears, lest I should hear the howlets flapping their wings and screaming in the belfry, and turned my face away from it in a sort of apprehension of seeing a spirit, or something waur, upon every grave; for your mother's prophecies were uppermost in my mind, in spite of all that I could say, or strive to think. And I believed that your uncle's mind was troubled wi' the same sort of fears or fancies; for we were both silent the greater part of the road, and spoke very little to each other.

"However, just about one o'clock, and when the moon was beginning to edge down upon the Lammermuirs, we arrived at an enclosure, in which Cunningham had sixty head of cattle penned. The six of us had but little difficulty in breaking down the gate that opened to the enclosure; and just as we were beginning to drive out the cattle, a man started up on a sort of tower place that was built upon the wall that surrounded them, and hurled a kind of instrument round his head, that made a noise like a thousand corn-craiks crying together in concert, and craiking which to craik loudest and fastest. At the unearthly sound, the cattle also commenced a louting, that might easily have been heard at two or three miles off.

"It at once struck me, as the best and wisest step for us to take, that we should put spurs into our horses, and gallop back to Tweedside; for I kenned it would be impossible for us to secure a single cow, surrounded, as we were sure to be in a few minutes, by sixty or a hundred men; and though I was no coward, I was aware that there could be but little bravery in six men attempting to give battle to sixty. But, before I had time to come to a determination, or even to speak, I saw your uncle's pistol flash; and, even I may say before I heard the report, I perceived the man tumble down headlong from the turret on the wall, among the horns of the cattle.

"'Ye have done wrong in shooting the lad, said I· ye



THE WHITSOME TRAGEDY.

have raised the whole countryside; and presently Cunningham and all his host will be at our heels.'

"'No fear,' said he; 'there is small danger of that—a dead tongue tells no tales. And Cunningham and his host, as you term them, may be at our face, but never shall they be at our heels, unless it be marching or fighting against a common enemy.'

"We began, therefore, to drive out the cattle; but scarce had we driven them from the enclosure, and turned their heads towards the Tweed, when we heard the baying of Cunningham's blood-hounds, and the shouts of his people.

'The sounds of their horses' feet became audible, and every moment they gained ground upon us. It was apparent that, if we persisted in keeping possession of the cattle, and attempting to drive them before us, within two minutes, and we would be within swords' length of each other.

'Brother,' said I to your uncle, as I turned and perceived that the number of our pursuers could not be under thirty, and was conscious that that number would soon be doubled—'Brother,' said I, 'let us spur on our horses, and leave the cattle to cover our retreat. It is no disgrace for six men to flee before sixty.'

"'Be it so,' he said; but it was too late. The cattle, scared by the shouting of our pursuers, the howling of their blood-hounds, and the flashing of their torches, (for they had lighted fir branches to pursue us, as the moon was setting,) tossed their horns in the air, and ran wildly to and fro; so that the horses, in their turn, were scared to pass through them, and we were so hemmed in between thick woods, that there was no riding round them.

"The followers of Cunningham surrounded us with a wild shout, and a cry for revenge. But we drew close together—we formed ourselves into a little circle—and waiting the attack of our antagonists, we contended with them hand to hand. Ten of them lay writhing on the earth, or had retired, wounded, from the contest; while our little band remained unwounded, unbroken. For more than a quarter of an hour, we maintained the unequal fight. But victory, on our side, was impossible, and escape all but hopeless. Your uncle was the first of our number that fell. The sword of an enemy had pierced his bosom, and I heard him shout to me, in a voice rendered dismal with agony, never to yield!—to fight to the last! as he lay bleeding on the ground.

"I was then contending, hand to hand, with Cunningham. In our rage, we had closed by the side of each other, and each grasped the other by the throat. He shortened his sword, and, with a triumphant laugh, was lunging it at my side, when, with a sudden and violent effort, I hurled him from the saddle. As he rose, he thrust his sword into the breast of the horse on which I rode, which reared, sprang forward, and fell, and I was thrown upon the ground, in the midst of enemies.

"Two of the four who accompanied us were also wounded, and disabled from continuing the fight; and the other two, upon seeing your uncle and myself upon the ground, surrendered. In my fall, my hand quitted not my sword. I sprang to my feet, and smote around me to the right and to the left, with the fury of a wild beast. My object was to cut my way through my adversaries to the woods. I at length succeeded; but not until I had been thrice wounded. I rushed forward among the trees, until the sound of my pursuers died away; but the moon had gone down, and I knew not in what direction I ran, but pressed onward and onward, until exhausted, through loss of blood, I fell upon the ground A sleep that was nae sleep came owre me, and a dream that was nae dream stealed owre my senses; while the blood continued oozing from my wounds, and my soul was creeping away. Something was growing owre my faculties, just like the opening of a starry night, as the gloaming dies away, and star after star peeps out. I at first felt happy; just steeped, as it were, in a sensation of pleasantness; and there were sounds like sweet music in my ears. But the feeling of happiness was changed, I kenned not how, for one of pain—the feeling of pleasantness for one of horror—and the sweet sounds into dismal howls. I started up—I grasped my sword firmer in my hand; but the howls departed not wi' the disturbed sleep from which I had been startled; but they broke upon my ear, louder and nearer—the howls of the savage sleuth-hound, that had been sent to track me. I heard the horrid beast snuff the air, and break into short, hurried, and savage howls of delight, within a few yards of me. I had not strength to fly; and if I had had strength, flight would have been impossible. My pursuers seemed to have lost trace of the animal; for I could neither hear their footsteps nor the sound of their voices. I made no attempt at flight, but stood waiting its approach, with my sword uplifted to smite it. Loss of blood had brought a dimness over my eyes, which, added to the darkness of the wood, made me that I had rather to grope and listen for the animal, than perceive it, as it might attempt to spring upon me. I would rather have met ten enemies than, in darkness, and in my then fainting state, have waited the attack of that savage beast. It sprang upon me—I struck towards it with my sword, and wounded it; but the weapon came in contact with the tangled branches of the underwood, and the force of the blow was broken. In another moment and I felt the paws of the monster upon my breast. I grasped it by the throat, and we fell upon the ground together—my enemy uppermost. Its teeth were in my shoulder. After several vain attempts, I drove my sword through its body. The howls of the fierce beast were terrible. It withdrew its teeth from my shoulder, and struggled to escape; but I still held it by the throat—with the gripe of death I held it—and still, still strove to pierce it again and again. I held it till it was stiff, cold, and dead!

"Wounded, faint, and weary as I was, I ventured from the woods before morning broke, and crossed the Tweed at Kersfield. The sun rose at the very moment that I turned the corner of the hill which conceals our house from the public road, and revealed to me your mother, sitting on the blue stone at the door, as cold and frozen like to appearance as if she had sat there the livelong night, (as I afterwards understood she had.) Her hands were clasped together, her eyes were raised upward, and her lips were moving, as if she were repeating a prayer, or muttering a charm. When she saw me approaching the door, she rose from the stone, and, striking her hand upon her brow, cried—'Jonathan Moor! ye cruel man! ye disregarder of the warnings of her whose life is as the shadow of your life! said I not that the hound was howling, and the raven was flapping its wings for a feast?—yet ye would not listen to my voice! And my brother!—where is my brother?—the son of my mother—more headstrong and foolish than yoursel'! Ye daurna answer, and ye needna answer. He is dead! The horses of Cunningham have trampled on his body, and he lies unburied.'

"I didna ken how to find words to speak to her, and, indeed, I was hardly able to speak; for the pain and stiffness of my wounds were terrible to endure, and there was a sickness about my heart that made me that I could have been willing to have lain down and died; and even welcomed death, as a weary man would welcome sleep.

"I was almost recovered from my wounds before we were exactly certain as to your uncle's fate; and that was when three out of the four that had accompanied us were permitted by Cunningham to return home, the other having died of his wounds a few days after the unlucky foray. From their account, it appeared that the person shot by your uncle, while watching the cattle against the inroads of an enemy, was none other than the only brother of Cunningham. He was not aware of his brother's death until after the af-

fray, when he was found lying in the enclosure, into which the cattle were again driven. He was offering a free pardon to all his prisoners, save him by whose hand his brother fell, upon condition that they would betray him, when your uncle, starting up from the uncouth litter of branches, rudely torn from the trees, and upon which he was carried, cried out—'I did it!—my hand brought him down from his watch-box, like a crow from its roost!'

"'To the turret wi' him!' exclaimed Cunningham wildly; 'and fling him from its pinnacle to the yard below.'

"The fierce command was fiercely and willingly obeyed. Your uncle was borne to the top of the tower over the wall, and hurled headlong to the ground; and he lay there, with the cattle trampling upon him, and the dogs licking his sores, until he was dead.

"Your mother heard the tidings in silence; but, from that day until this, she has never been as she used to be. Her anger is awful in a woman; and she vows and says the day will come when she will have revenge upon the name of Cunningham. She has spoken little of her gift of second-sight since ye were born; but she is often subject to long and gloomy fits of silent melancholy, as ye have all been witnesses; and I attribute it all to our foray to Simprin. But," (the old man would add in conclusion,) "would that the good old times were come back again, when I could meet Cunningham in the field; and he should find the hand that unhorsed him five and twenty years syne has lost but little of its strength."

Now, the eldest sons of Jonathan and Barbara Moor were twins, and the youngest were also twins, and they had no daughters living. The two eldest were seven and twenty, and the two youngest seventeen, when the civil war between the King and the Parliament took place. Walter Cunningham and three sons, with several of his dependants, joined the royal army; and he had but another son, who was then but an infant of a few months old, and whose mother had died ere his infant lips drew from her breast the nourishment of life. That infant he regarded as the Benjamin of his age, and loved him with a double love for his mother's sake. But, deeming that his duty to his King called him to arms, he, with his three eldest sons and followers took the field, leaving the infant in the charge of a tried nurse.

Now, when Jonathan Moor heard that his old enemy had joined the King's standard, although he was too much of an ancient Borderer to care aught for either one party or another, or for any cause save his own hand; yet, to know that Cunningham had joined the King's party, was enough to induce him to join the army of the Parliament. He knew nothing about the quarrel—and he cared nothing; neither did he understand anything of the religious disputes of the period; for, generally speaking, religion upon the Borders in those days was at a very low ebb. In Berwick, and other places, John Knox, the dauntless apostle of the north, with others of his followers, had laboured some years before; but their success was not great; the Borderers could not be made to understand why they should not "take who had the power," even though kings and wardens issued laws, and clergymen denounced judgments against the practice. It was of no use to tell them "Thou shalt not steal;" the difficulty was to convince them what was theft. It was, therefore, merely because his former adversary and his sons were in the King's army, that Jonathan Moor, with his sons, joined the army of the Parliament.

Barbara protested bitterly against the departure of her husband and her sons to take part in the wars. "Wherefore, Jonathan," she cried, "wherefore will ye sacrifice yourself, and why will ye gie up my winsome sons to the jaws of death? Is there not enough provided for the eagles' and the ravens' banquet, without their bonny blue een to peck at? Bide at hame, and, with my bairns, plough up the green fields, that the earth may provide us with food, as a fond mother, from its bosom. But go ye to the wars, and your destiny is written—your doom is sealed. The blackness of lonely midnight hangs owre me as my widow's hood, and, like Rachel, I shall be left to weep for my children, for they will not be! Turn again, my husband, and my sons lay down your weapons of war. Hearken unto my voice, and remember that ye never knew one of my words fall to the ground. If ye go now, ye rush upon the swords that are sharpened for your destruction, and ye hasten to fatten the raven and the worm; for the winds shall sing your dirge, as your bonny yellow hair waves to the blast, and the gloaming and the night fling a shroud owre your uncoffined limbs. Ye go, but ye winna return. Ye will see the sun rise, but not set—and these are hard words for a mother to say."

But her husband and her sons were men of war. They loved its tumult and its strife, as a hound loveth the sound that calls it to the chase, or a war-horse the echoes of the bugle; and, though they at times trembled at her wild words, they regarded them not. Taking their route by way of Coldstream, Greenlaw, and Soutra Hill, in order to avoid the army of General Leslie, which then occupied the eastern part of Lammermuir, they descended towards Dunbar, where they enrolled themselves as volunteers in the army of Cromwell. A few days after their arrival, they joined a skirmishing party, and, in a wild glen, near to Spot, they encountered a similar company that had been sent out by General Leslie. In the latter party, were Walter Cunningham and his three sons, and he, indeed, was their commander.

It was with a look of ruthless delight that Jonathan Moor descried his old enemy at the head of the opposite party; and he said unto his sons—"Yonder is the murderer of your uncle—Cunningham of Simprin, with his three young birkies brawly mounted, and riding sprucely at his back. But, before night, the braw plumes in their beavers shall be trampled on the earth, and the horse will be lame that carries one of them back. Stick ye by my side, and ride ye where I ride; for it will be music to your mother's soul to ken that her brother's death is avenged, and by the hands of her own flesh and blood."

The two parties rode forward and met each other. The Cunninghams and the Moors were face to face. The two fathers sat as if fixed upon their saddles for a few seconds, eyeing each other with looks of deadly hatred and ferocity, and recalling the days and the strife of other years.

Though neither party mustered fifty, the onset was fierce and furious—the struggle long and desperate; and, on each side, more than half their original number lay dead or wounded on the ground. Amongst the former were the seven sons of Jonathan Moor, and the three sons of Walter Cunningham. The old men maintained a desperate combat with each other, apart from the rest, until, breathless and exhausted, both for a few minutes paused, each holding the point of his sword towards the other's breast; and they now looked once more in each other's face, and again upon the ground, where they beheld the dead bodies of their sons. Grief seemed to seek expression in redoubled rage—again their swords clashed against each other, and gleamed in the sunbeams, rapid as the fitful lightning. After a long and sore contention, in which both had given and received wounds, they fell upon the ground together; but Moor received his death-wound on the ground, and he fell to rise no more.

"I die!" he gasped, still grasping his antagonist by the breast—"I die, Cunningham—with my children, whom I have led to death, I die! But, remember, there is one left to avenge our deaths, and she will avenge them seven-fold!"

Thus saying, his head fell back upon the ground, and he spoke not again. Cunningham, disengaging himself from the dead man's grasp, went towards the bodies of his children, and throwing himself upon the earth by their side, he kissed their lifeless eyeballs, and mourned over them. His grief was too intense and his wounds too severe, to permit

him continuing with the army, and he returned to his estate near Simprin, to watch over and protect his infant and only surviving son.

When the tidings were brought to Barbara Moor, that she, in one day, had been bereaved of her husband and seven sons, and that the former had fallen by the hand of Cunningham, the destroyer of her brother, she sat and listened to the bearer of the evil tidings as one deprived of the power of speech and motion. Her cheeks, her eyes, manifested no change; but she sat calm, fixed, and entranced in the apathy of death. Her hands remained folded upon her bosom, and her head moved not. The messenger stood wondering and horror-struck, and twice he repeated his melancholy tale; but the listener took no outward note either of his words or his presence, and he departed, marvelling at the silent sorrow of the widow.

"I knew it, man," she exclaimed, starting from her death-like trance after the messenger had departed—"I knew they would not return to me. I told them, but they believed me not—they would not hearken to my words. Miserable, deserted being that I am! wherefore should I live to mourn with the winter winds, or make a companion of the fearsome echoes that howl in the dark glens? Has not my husband, and have not my seven winsome sons, than whom there were not in Northumberland seven comelier lads—not to say brothers—oh, have not they, in one day, been snatched away, and swallowed up from me, as a jewel that is flung into the deep sea! But I will live to be avenged of their deaths, and my brother's death; and their destroyer shall not dandle a bairn upon his knee, or kiss its cheek, while mine are *all, all* dead, and in a strange grave, and even wi' no one near to pull up the noxious nettle that may be waving ower their once bonny and snow-white bosoms!"

Thus raved the wretched and childless mother; and from that day she was as one who had no fixed abode or resting-place; but, throughout the greater part of the year, wandered to and fro, no one could tell whither; and when she was found near the scenes of happier years, it was as a lonely dweller in the clay-built hovel of which mention has been made. She was a woman of a strong, perhaps it might be said a strange mind; but her imagination was stronger—it was fevered, and early tinctured with gloomy superstitions, until they became like a portion of her creed and her existence; and her afflictions tended to increase its morbidness.

The life of Walter Cunningham now became wrapt up in that of his only son—the child was ever before his eyes, and he watched over his growth as over a tender plant. His sole "care was to increase his store," and lay up treasure for the child of his age, the youngest and the only survivor of his flock. The number of his flocks and of his herds increased greatly, and he was in the habit of attending the fairs upon the Borders, to dispose of them. It was Whitsome fair; and he sent there many of his cattle and his sheep for sale. He also attended it, and he took with him his son, who was then a boy of from three to four years of age.

It was drawing towards evening, and Mr Cunningham, in concluding a bargain with a person who had bought a number of his cattle, was separated from his child. He had not been absent from the spot where he had left him for ten minutes; but the child had disappeared; and search was made for him throughout the fair, but he was nowhere to be found, neither could any one give tidings of him. The anxious father sought his lost child from booth to booth; and, with his friends, he also searched the adjoining woods. He called his son by name, till, from far amidst the trees, it was echoed back; but that cheerless echo, or the scream of a startled bird, was his only reply The disappearance of the child was a mystery which no one could unriddle. His father, during the few minutes that he was to be absent, had left him in charge of a servant, who confessed having entered a drinking booth, and as the liquor went round, he perceived not that the child had left his side. For many days his father sought him sorrowing; but all search proved vain.

Mr Cunningham returned to his house, a heart-broken and miserable man. The last, the only being that he loved on earth, had disappeared from his fond gaze, even as a beautiful vapour of strange shapes and gorgeous colours, which we gaze upon in the heavens, and turning from it but for a moment, we look for it again—but it is not. He refused to listen to words of consolation, or even of hope; and for several years he left not his house, but sat in loneliness, making a companion of his sorrow.

Now, it was on a dark and dismal winter night, seven years after the disappearance of his son, when the hail rattled fiercely against the narrow casements of his habitation, and the wind howled wildly over the earth, tearing the branches from the naked trees, and causing the cattle to crowd together for shelter—that a wild voice was heard, singing a wilder dirge, as if to the measure and music of the storm. The sound came from an open shed adjoining the house, where the cattle had been placed for shelter.

The servants informed their master that a strange woman, whose wits seemed disordered, had crept into the shed, where, before morning, from the fury of the storm, she would doubtless perish. They took a light, and he accompanied them to the shed.

Before them a wretched being sat upon the straw, and the hail dashed bitterly against her unshrinking, but time-worn, and storm-beaten features. Her grey hairs waved loose and wildly in the wind. Her hands were clasped together upon her breast; and, as she sat, she sang the wild and melancholy dirge that has been mentioned. The burden of the strain was "Childless!—childless!—childless!" And again it waxed louder, and a prayer for vengeance was wildly sung. She sat and continued her dirge, regardless of their presence, and appeared as though she saw them not. The tears gathered in the eyes of Mr Cunningham, as he listened to her dark words, and his limbs shook with a trembling motion.

"Take her into the house," said he, "and give her food and shelter for the night. If my poor boy yet live, he may be now perishing, with none to shelter him."

At his mention of his lost son, her wild strain suddenly ceased. She started to her feet; and, as she fixed upon him her haggard features, while her grey hairs, and the many-coloured rags that covered her, waved in the stormy wind, she seemed as though she were not an inhabitant of the earth, but rather the demon of the storm.

"Ha! ha! ha!" she cried, with a hideous laugh, that made the beholders and the hearers shudder; "shelter from you!—the murderer of my brother!—of my husband!—of my children!—of my seven fair sons!—you that have made me childless! Back to thy dwelling, dog; and, if it will, add another drop of torturing anxiety to your soul, to know that your son lives, and that you shall see him, but never know him—learn that he does live! He lives!"

"Where, woman?—where?" exclaimed the wretched father.

She hastily dashed a sort of lantern from the hand of the servant who held it, and, rushing from the shed towards the open fields, again laughed more dismally than before, and cried—"Where? She whom ye have made childless, leaves that *where* to torture you for ever!"

The wretched father rushed after her; but, in the darkness, the noise, and tempest of the night, it was impossible to trace in what direction she had fled. As every reader must be already aware, the strange and fearful-looking woman was Barbara Moor, the widowed and childless mother. The words which she had spoken, regarding his son being yet alive, increased the anxious misery of Walter Cunningham. It caused his wounds, the anguish of which time had in some degree abated, to bleed afresh. At one

time he doubted and at another he believed, the words which the seeming maniac had uttered; and he made journeys to many places, in the hope of again meeting her, and of extorting from her a confession where he should find his son, or of obtaining some information that might throw light upon his fate. But his journeys then were as fruitless as his former inquiries.

We must here introduce another character to our readers, in the person of Sandy Reed. At the period at which we introduce him, he was a widower, between forty and fifty years of age, with an only daughter, named Anne, a child of five years old; and his house was kept by a maiden aunt, who was on the aged side of sixty. Sandy was a farmer near the Reed Water, in Northumberland, and as fine a specimen of the ancient Northumbrian farmer as could be met with—a distinct race, a few samples of whom were here and there to be found within the last thirty years—free, careless, hospitable, happy, boisterous, unlettered, and half-civilized. Sandy was one of these in their primitive state. He was in truth—

"A fine old English farmer,
One of the olden time."

He was as hardy as the hills on which his sheep fed. He was ready at all times either to shake hands or to break a head—to give or to take. No one ever entered his house and went out hungry. He had a bed, a bite, and a bottle for every one; and he was wont to say that he would rather treat a beggar than lose good company. He was no respecter of rank, nor did he understand much concerning it. He judged of the respect due to every one by what he called the "rule of good fellows." Burns makes the wife of Tam o' Shanter say—

"Ilka horse ye ca'ed a shoe on,
The smith and you gat roaring fu' on."

But Tam had been but the degenerated shadow of Sandy Reed; for every time he had to pay a visit to the smith with his nag, they would have

"Been fu' for weeks thegither!"

When he had business at Morpeth market, his journey home never occupied less than a fortnight, though the distance was not quite thirty miles; for the worthy farmer had to stop three or four days at every hostelry by the way, for the sake of company, as he affirmed, and the good of the road; but he cared not much for going half-a-dozen miles out of his way to add another house of entertainment to the number; and it mattered not to him whether the company he met with were Roundheads or Cavaliers, provided they could shew the heel-taps of their bottle, and, in the intervals of bringing in a new one, wrestle, run, leap, or put, or quarrel in a friendly way, if they preferred it.

But we shall record a portion of Sandy's adventures, so far as they are connected with our story, in his own words. The following was one of his favourite anecdotes of himself:—

"It was about three years after my wife's death, poor body," (he began,) "that I had been owre at Morpeth market, wi' four score o' ewes and six score o' hogs. I was at least comfortable when I left Morpeth, but noughts aboon comfortable; for I had only had twenty queghs* o' English gin, (which, thou must understand, in our part o' the country, means Cheviot-made whisky,) and seven o' them were public-house ones, which wouldna count aboon three or four guid ones—so thou seest that I had had noughts in the world to make me onything but sober. Hoos'ever, I just thought to mysel', thinks I—drat! I'll away round by Elsdon, and see what a' my cronies there are about So, 'To the right Dobbin, my canny fellow, said I to my nag—and it was as wise an animal as ever man had to speak to; it knawed every word I said, and understud me whether I was drunk or sober, mony a time, when ne'er a one else could make out what I said. But the poor beast had had sae meikle experience wi' me, that it knawed what I meant by a wink as weel as a nod. So I said to it—'To the right, Dobbin, my canny fellow; thou shalt be foddered at awd Betty Bell's t'night, and if a' be as it shud be, thou shalt hae a rest t'morrow tee, into the bargain.' So Dobbin took away across the moor to Elsdon, just as natural as a Christian could hae done. Weel, when I reached Elsdon, and went into Betty Bell's, there were five o' my cronies sitting. They were a trumps, and they gied me three cheers when I went in, for they knawed that I was out and out a gud 'un.

"'Ha! Sandy!' said they, 'thou'rt welcome, my canny lad—we just wanted ye to make the half dozen. Hast thou been at Morpeth?'

"'Yea,' said I, 'and hae just come round by Elsdon to hae a boot wi' thee.'

"'So be it,' said they; and we sat down in gud earnest, and three glorious days we had, and would have had mair, but that we drank Betty Bell's cupboards dry. The stars were just beginning to wink out as I got my feet in the stirrups, and to confess the truth, I was winking far worse than the stars. However, Dobbin took across the moors, and I was in the high road for my home. How it was I dinna knaw; but I rather think that I had fallen asleep, and that something or other had scared the nag, and I had slipped out o' the saddle. I mind o' lying very cauld and uncomfortable, half-dreaming, half-waking, and, I daresay, more than three parts the worse o' drink. I mind, tee, o' calling to my aunt as I thought, 'Auntie!—do thou hear?—bring another blanket to throw owre me, and put out that light—I canna get a wink o' sleep for it.' Then I thought I found something upon my breast, that was like my little Anne's head, and I put my hand out, and I said, 'Is that thee, Anne love?' But there was no answer; and I gied the head a shake, when, my conscience! there was such a frightened squall got up, that I sprang right upon my feet, and, to my astonishment, there had I been lying upon the moor, wi' Dobbin at my side, and the light which I wished to have put out was neither more nor less than the moon! But what surprised me most of all, and put me about what to dow, was, that what I had taken for my little Anne that had creeped to my side, as she often did when I came home, was nowther more nor less than a wee, ragged. infant laddie, that had been lying fast asleep, wi' his head upon my bosom! There wasna a living creature in human shape upon the moor but our two sells; and how he came there was a miracle to me! 'Laddie,' says I, 'where dost thou come frae? What be thy faither, eh?—or thy mother? Be they alive?—or who brought thee here? Come, tell me, and I will gie thee a penny.'

"But the poor bairn seemed more bewildered to find itsel' where it was than I did, and the more I offered to speak to it, it cried the louder.

"'Why, thou needna cry,' said I, 'I winna eat thee, but how came thou here?—and where be thy faither and mother?'

"However, I could get nought but screams and cries o' terror out o' the little innocent; so I cried all round the moor, at the very pitch o' my voice—'Holloa!—be there any one within hearing that has lost a bairn?' But I am thinking that I might have cried till now, and nobody would have answered, for it is my belief the bairn came there by magic! I canna say that I have seen the fairy folk mysel', though I have heard them often enough, but I am inclined to believe that they had a hand in stealing away the infant laddie frae his parents, and laying his head upon my breast on the moor. I declare to thee, though I couldna stand steady, I was at a stand still what to do. I couldna leave the infant to perish upon the moor, or I shud never hae been able to sleep in my bed again wi' the thoughts on't; and whenever I had to go to Morpeth, why, I should hae been afeared that its little ghost would hae haunted me in the

* The wooden quegh, used as a drinking vessel in those days, contained rather more than would fill a wine

home-coming; and, if I would hae been afeared o' it, it is mair than I would hae been o' meeting the biggest man in a' Northumberland. But, if I took it hame, why, I thought again, there would be sic talking and laughing amang a' wur neighbours, who would be saying that the bairn was a son o' my awn, and my awd aunt would lecture me dead about it. However, finding I could mak naething out o' the infant, I lifted him up on the saddle before me, and took him home wi' me.

" ' Why, what be that thou hast brought, Sandy lad?' asked my awd aunt, as she came to the door to meet me.

" ' Why, it be a bairn, aunt, that I found on the moor, poor thing,' said I.

" ' A bairn!' quoth she—' I hope thou be na the faither o't, Sandy?'

" ' I'll gie thee my hand and word on't, aunt,' said I, ' that I knaw nowther the faither nor mother o't; and from the way in which I found it upon the moor, I doubt whether ever it had owther the one or the other.'

" My aunt was easier satisfied than I expected, and, by degrees, I let out the whole secret o' the story o' finding him, both to her and to my neighbours. Nobody ever came to own him, and he soon grew to be a credit to the manner in which I had brought him up. Before he could be more than seventeen, he was a match for ony man on Reed water or Coquet side, at ony thing they dared to take him up at. I was proud o' the laddie, for he did honour to the education I had gien him; and, before he was eighteen, he was as tall as mysel'. He isna nineteen yet; and my daughter Anne and him are bonnier than ony twa pictures that ever were hung up in the Duke o' Northumberland's castle. Ay, and they be as fond o' each other as two wood pigeons. It wud do thy heart gud to see them walking by Reed water side together, wi' such looks o' happiness in their eyes, that ye wud say, sorrow could never dim them wi' a tear. Anne will be a year, or maybe two, awder than him; but, as soon as I think he will be one-and-twenty, they shall be a wedded pair. Ay, and at my deeth, the farm shall be his too—for a better lad ye winna meet in a' Northumberland, nor yet in a' the counties round about it. He has a kind heart and a ready hand; and his marrow, where strength, courage, or a determined spirit are wanted, I haena met wi'. There is, to be sure, a half-dementit, wild awd wife, they ca' Babby Moor, that gangs fleeing about wur hills, for a' the world like an evil speerit, and she puts strange notions into his head, and makes a cloud o' uneasiness, as it were, sit upon his brow. When I saw that I would have to keep him, I didna ken what name to gie him; but, after consulting wi' my friends and the clergyman o' the parish, it was agreed that he should bear the surname o' wur family, and my faither's Christian name; so we called him Patrick Reed. But the daft awd wife came upon him one day amang the hills, and she pretended to look on his brow, and read the lines on his hand, and told him, frae them, that Patrick Reed wasna his real name, but that he would find it out some day—that he was born to be rich, though he might never be rich—and that he had an awd grey-haired faither that was mourning for him night and day, and that he had adopted the son of a relation to be his heir. When he came home, he was greatly troubled, but he was too open-hearted to conceal from me, or from Anne, the cause of his uneasiness; and when he had tould us a' that the mad awd wife had said, I tried to laugh him out o' thinking about it, and bade him bring the bottle and take a glass like a man, and never mind it. But Patrick was nae drinker; and he gravely said to me, that the face o' the half-daft woman came owre his brain like a confused dream—that he had something like a remembrance of what she had said; and he also thought that he remembered having seen her. I wish the witch had been in the bottom o' the sea ere she met wi' him; for ever syne then—though Anne and he are as kind and as loving as ever—he isna half the lad that he used to be; and there is nae getting him now to take a game at onything—though he could beat everybody—for either love or money."

Such was one of the stories which rough, honest, fear-nothing Sandy Reed told, in relating his adventures. Now, it came to pass, that when Patrick, the foundling of whom he has spoken, had been sheltered beneath his roof for the space of seventeen years, that Sandy, having introduced the cultivation of turnips upon the lowlands of his farm, proposed to go to Whitsome fair, to purchase cattle to fatten with them, and also sheep from the Lammermuirs to eat them on the ground. He was now more than threescore, and he was less capable of long journeys than he had been; and he requested that his adopted son Patrick, who was also to be his son-in-law, should accompany him; and it was agreed that they should set out for Whitsome together.

But, on the evening before their departure, as the maiden Anne was returning from a visit to the wife of a neighbouring farmer, she was intercepted within a mile of her father's house. The sibyl-like figure of Barbara Moor stood before her, and exclaimed—" Stand, maiden! Ye love the young man whom ye call Patrick—whom your father has so called—and who resides beneath his roof. He loves you. And ye shall be wed, if I, who have his destiny in my hands, have strength to direct it! And yet there must be more blood!—more!—for I am childless!—childless!—childless! We are not even yet!" She paused, and pressed her hand upon her brow; while the maiden, startled at her manner, trembled before her. But she again added—" Yes! yes!—ye shall be wed—the bauble wealth shall be yours, and ye deserve happiness. But hearken, ye maiden, for on the obeying of my words depends your fate. When your faither and Patrick set out for Whitsome fair, request ye to accompany them—insist that ye do, and ye shall return here a wealthy and a wedded wife; for she says it whose words were never wasted on the wind. Swear, maiden, that ye will perform what I have commanded ye."

" Woman!" said Anne, quaking as she spoke, I neve swore, and I winna swear; but I give thee my hand that I will obey thee. I will go to Whitsome fair wi' my faither and Patrick."

" Go! go!" cried the sibyl, " lest the dark spirit come upon me; and he whom ye call Patrick shall die by his father's hand, or his father by his. But speak not of whom ye have seen, nor of what he have heard—but go and do as ye have been commanded. Be silent till we meet again."

Anne bent her head in terror, and promised to obey; and the weird woman, again exclaiming—" Go!—be silent!—obey!" hastened from her sight.

When Anne entered the house, her father, and her adopted brother, or lover, were making ready for their journey. She sat down silently and thoughtfully in a corner of the apartment, and her half-suppressed sighs reached their ears.

" Why, what in the globe, daughter Anne," said her father, " can make thee sigh? Art thou sad, because Patrick is to leave thee to go to a fair for a day or two? I suppose thou wouldn't hae troubled thy head, had thy father been to be absent as many months. But I don't blame thee, I mind I was tender-hearted at thy age, too—but Patrick knaws better what to say to thee than I do."

" Dear Anne," whispered the youth, taking her hand, " what ails thee?"

" Ask my father," she rejoined, hesitatingly, " that I may accompany you to Whitsome fair to-morrow."

" Nay, thou canst not go dear," returned Patrick; " it is a long ride and a rough one; and the society thou wilt meet with will afford thee no pleasure, and but small amusement."

" I must go," she replied—" a strange being has laid a terrible command on me!"

" A grey-haired, wild-looking woman?" ejaculated Patrick, and his voice trembled as he spoke.

"Ask me no more," was her reply, "I must—I will accompany you."

"A dead dream," said the youth, "seems bursting into life within my brain. There are once familiar words ready to leap to my tongue that I cannot utter—and long forgotten memories haunting my mind, and flinging their shadows over it, as though the substance again were approaching. But the woman that ye speak of!——yes! yes!—there is something more than a dream, dear Anne, that links my fate with her! I remember—I am sure it is no fancy—I do remember having been at a fair when I was a child—a mere child—and the woman ye allude to was there! Yes! yes!—you must accompany us! I feel, I am certain, that woman hath, indeed, my destiny in her hands!"

"Gudness me!" exclaimed Sandy, "what is it that ye twasome are saying between ye? Is there ony light thrown upon the awd story; or, is it only the half-crazed randy—(forgie me for ca'ing the poor afflicted creature by ony sic name)—but, I say, is it only some o' the same nonsense that Babby Moor has been cramming into Anne's ear, wi' which she has filled thine, lad? Upon my word, if I had my will o' the awd witch, I would douk her in the Reed, till she confessed that every story she has tould to thee was a lie from end to end."

"Well, father," said Patrick—for he always called Sandy father—"let Anne accompany us to the fair—she requests it, and I will also request it for her."

"Ou, ye knaw," said Sandy, "if ye hae made up yer minds between yoursels, that ye are determined to gaun, I suppose it would be o' no use for me to offer opposition to owther o' the two o' ye. So, if thou wilt go, get thee ready, Anne, my dear, for it will take us to be off frae here by twelve o'clock t'night, for it is a lang ride, and a rugged ride, as thou wilt find it to thy cost, ere ye be back again. I was never there for my own part, but I hear that the sale o' feeding cattle is expected to be gud—and there I maun be. So, get thee ready, daughter, if ye will go, and hap thysel' weel up."

At midnight, Sandy Reed, his daughter, and his adopted son, with three or four farm-servants, all mounted on light, but strong and active horses, accustomed to the character of the country, set out for Whitsome fair.

They arrived at Whitsome before noon on the following day, having crossed the Tweed at Coldstream. There was one individual in the fair, who had some hundred head of cattle exhibited for sale, and that was old Cunningham of Simprin. He himself was present; but he took but small interest in the transactions, for he was becoming old, and was in general melancholy; and a nephew, whom he intended to make his heir, accompanied him, and in most matters made bargains for him, and in his name.

Now, Sandy Reed, after walking through the market, said the only lot that would suit him was that of Cunningham of Simprin. We may here observe that, throughout the day, young Patrick became thoughtful and more thoughtful. Even the presence of Anne, who leaned upon his arm, could hardly summon up a passing smile into his features.

After much disputing and sore bargain-making, Sandy Reed, at a good round sum, became the purchaser of all the stock that old Walter Cunningham exhibited in the fair. And when the bargain had been completed, the seller, the buyer, and their servants, retired to a booth together; the former to treat his customer with a bottle, and the latter to spend the "luck-penny," which, on such occasions, he was wont to say, would burn a hole in his pocket before he got home.

Both were men who were accustomed to drink deep—for old Cunningham had sought to drown his sorrows in the bottle; and what would have been death to another man, took no effect upon him. Sandy saw him swallow glass after glass, without his countenance betraying any symptom of change, with vexation; for he had never before met with a superior, either at the bacchanalian board, or at aught else. But, as the liquor went round, the old men began to forget their age, (and, for a time, for the first time, Walter Cunningham forgot his sorrows,) and they boasted of what they had done; and forgetful that each was above threescore they were ever and anon about to profess what they could still do; but, on such occasions, Anne Reed, who sat by her father's elbow, gently and unobserved, admonished him.

Now, when Sandy found that he might not speak of what he could do, he thought there could be no harm in saying what his adopted son Patrick could do. He offered to match him at anything against any man in Berwickshire, yea, in all Scotland. The blood of old Cunningham boiled at the bravado. He said he had had three sons—yea, he hoped to have said four—any of whom would have stopped the boasting, and taken up the challenge of his Northumbrian friend. But he said he had still a nephew, and he would risk him against Sandy's champion.

"A bargain be it," cried Sandy, and the young men proceeded to various trials of strength; but the nephew of Cunningham, though apparently a strong man, was as a weaned child in the hands of young Patrick. Their countrymen, on both sides, became enraged, and it soon became a national quarrel. Scores were engaged on either side—knives were drawn and blood spilt; and headmost in the fray, but unarmed, was Sandy Reed, striking to the ground every one on whom his hand fell. But at length he fell, pierced by a knife, by the edge of a pool of water, and his last words were—"Revenge me, Patrick—protect my Anne—mine is yours!"

When weapons were exhibited, young Patrick drew one also, and he dealt a wound at every blow. When he heard the voice of his foster-father, he held the aged Cunningham by the throat, and his hand was uplifted to avenge his protector's death by the sacrifice of the old man's—when a loud, a hurried, and a wild voice cried aloud—"Hold, parricide! hold!—he against whom your hand is raised is your father!"

It was the voice of Barbara Moor. The young man's arms fell by his side as if a palsy had smitten them. He remembered the voice of the sibyl.

"What say ye!" cried the agonised old man—"who is my son?—how shall I know him?" For he, too, remembered her and well.

"He whose hand has been raised against your life," she cried, "and on whose bosom ye will remember and find the mark of a berry! Farewell!—farewell!" she added—"I am childless—ye are not." She had been wounded in the conflict as she rushed forward, and she sank down and died. We might lengthen our story with details; but it would be fruitless. In young Patrick, old Cunningham found his long lost son; with her last breath Barbara Moor acknowledged how she had decoyed him from the tent, at the fair, where his father had left him; and how, when she saw Sandy Reed asleep upon the moor, she had administered to the child a sleeping draught, and laid him upon his breast. Vain would it be to describe the joy of the old man, and as vain would it be to speak of the double chagrin of the nephew, who lost not only his laurels during the day, but also his hope of riches. Anne sorrowed many days for her father; but gave her hand to him who, in compliance with her request, his father continued to call Patrick; and the fountain by the side of which her father fell is still known in the village of Whitsome by the name of *Reed's Well;* and, on account of the life lost, and the blood shed on that occasion. Whitsome fair has been prohibited unto this day.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

PERSEVERANCE;

OR,

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RODERIC GRAY.

Courteous reader, thou must be aware that there is no virtue which conferreth greater benefits upon its possessor, than the virtue of perseverance. It can scale precipices, overtop mountains, encompass seas. Perseverance is a mighty conqueror; it fighteth against odds, and neither turneth its back nor is dismayed. Its progress may be slow, but in the end it is sure. As a snail ascendeth a perpendicular wall, it may fall or be driven back to the ground, but it will renew the attempt. It suffereth longer than charity, and hence came the adage, that "They who look for a silk gown always get a sleeve o't." It has been said, "Great is truth, and it will prevail;" and in addition thereunto, I would say, "Great is perseverance, for it also will prevail." The motto of every man should be—"*nil desperandum.*" Every one should remember, that real honour and esteem do not seek a man on whom they are to alight—the man must seek them; he must win them, and then wear them.

Instead, however, of detaining the reader with dull and general remarks on perseverance, I shall at once lay before them a copy of the autobiography of Roderic Gray, whose history will illustrate its effects in particulars:—

I was the son of poor but of honest parents. (With this stereotyped piece of history concerning poverty and honesty, Roderic Gray began his autobiography.) Yes, I repeat that my father and my mother were very poor, but they were sterlingly honest. They had a numerous family, and many privations to contend with; and the first thing I remember of my father was, a constant, I may say a daily expression of his—"Set a stout heart to a steep brae." Another great phrase of his, when any of us were like to be beaten by ought that we were attempting was—"Try it again—never be beat—step by step brings the mountain low." My mother was of a disposition precisely similar to my father. Almost the first thing I remember of her, is, what was her favourite expression—"Try it again, as your faither says—practice makes *perfiteness*."*

These expressions of my honoured parents were the rudiments of my education. They left an impression upon my heart, and upon my brain, before I was sensible of what an impression was. There is often a great deal more conveyed through a single sentence, than we are apt to imagine. Our future destiny may be swayed by the hearing of one little word, and that word may be spoken in our hearing at a very early period of our lives. Many a father, when years began to sober down the buoyant tumult of his spirits, has wondered at, and grieved over the disposition and actions of his son, marvelling whence they came; whereas the son received the feelings which gave birth to such actions, while he was but an infant, from the lips of his father, as he heard that father recount the deeds, the exploits, the feats of bravery of his young manhood. From the hour that a child begins to notice the objects around it, or to be sensible of kind or of harsh treatment, from that moment every one who takes it in their arms, every object around it, become its instructors. I find I am digressing from my autobiography, but I shall go on with it by and by, and as I have mentioned the subject of education, I shall say a few more words upon that subject, and especially on the education of the young, which, though it detain the reader for a short space from my history, will neither be uninstructive nor without interest.

Some years ago, I met with a modern Job, who said he had read through the large edition of Johnson's Dictionary: and I do regret, with considerable sincerity, having neglected to ask the gentleman whether, in the course of his highly entertaining reading, he met with any word so murdered, butchered, abused, and misunderstood, as the poor polysyllable—education. Many wise people conceive it to signify many multitudes of words—of dead words and of living words, of words without symbols; or, in plain language, they say, (or they act as if they said,) that education means to make a man's head a portable lexicon of all languages. This is what they term the education classical. Some very wise men go a step farther with the meaning of the term. They shake their heads in contempt at the mere word-men. They mingle more of utility with their idea of the signification. They maintain that education meaneth also certain figures, whereby something is learned concerning pounds and pence, and square inches and solid inches. Here the general idea of education terminates; and this is the education mercantile and mathematical. There are, however, a third class of philosophically wise men, who affirm that education meaneth the macadamizing, on a small scale, of blue stones and gray ones; in describing comets with tails, and planets without tails; in making the invisible gases give forth light in darkness, as the invisible mind lighteth mortality. This is the education scientific. Thus the artillery of all the three is directed against the head. The head is made a gentleman, a scholar, a philosopher, while the poor heart is suffered to remain in a state of untutored, uncared for, barbarity and ignorance. And in all this parade, concerning what education in reality imports, it is overlooked, that the heart from whence all evil proceeds—the heart where all good is received—is the soil where the first seeds of education ought to be sown, watered, watched over, pruned, and reared with tenderness. And it is not until the heart has become a sturdy savage, hardened in ignorance, that any attempts are made to curb it within the limits of moral obligation. A more insane idea cannot be conceived by a rational man, than supposing that education begins by learning to know that one letter is called A, a second B, and a third C. Education begins with the first glance which the mother bestows upon her child, in answer to its first smile. Before the infant has lisped its first word, the work of education has made progress. The mother is the first, the fondest, the most important and responsible teacher. It is hers to draw out the young soul, which dreams in the smiles and the laughing eyes of her infant—it is hers to subdue, and in gentleness to root up the first germ of evil that springs into existence—it is hers to unfold, by a thousand ways and a thousand tendernesses, which a mother's heart only can conceive, and a mother's eye only can express, the first shadows of right and of wrong—it is hers to teach feelings of love, of gentleness, and gratitude; to give a direction and a colouring to the embryo passions which shall mark the future character and destiny of her yet sucking child. Nor is there an object upon earth more worthy the admiration, we had almost said the envy of an angel, than a Christian

* Perfection.

mother gazing, in the depth of her affection, upon the babe of her bosom, watching its faculties expand like young flowers—bending them to the sun of truth, gently as the linnet bends the twig where it thrills its little song to cheer its partner. But, when the infant leaves the lap of its mother, and other duties divide her care, it is then necessary that a teacher, equally affectionate, and equally efficient, be provided; for children seek, and will find, teachers of good or of evil in every scene, and in every playmate. It is now that the Infant School must mature the education which the mother has, or ought to have begun. Some disciple of moth-eaten customs, whose ideas are like the flight of a bat, and whose imagination is hung round with cobwebs, may snarl out his mouthfuls of broken humanity, and inquire—what could be earned by infants of two or of five years of age, to compensate for blighting their ruddy cheeks like tender plants in a frost-wind, by mewing them up and crowding them together within the dismal walls of a noxious school-room, through the midst of which a male or a female tyrant continue their dreary tramp, tramping to and fro within the hated circle of their terror, and flourishing fear and trembling in their hand in the shape of a birch, the bark of which has yielded to their work of punishment? I readily admit, that, in such a place, and under such a teacher, nothing could be learned—nothing experienced—but an early foretaste of future misery. This is no picture of an Infant School—this is no part of its discipline. Never would I confine the little innocents within the walls of a prison-house—never would I behold them trembling beneath the frown of a task-master. I would not curtail one of their infant joys, nor cut off one of their young pleasures. I would not mar their merry play, nor curb the glee that wantons in their little clubs. But I would mingle education with their joy and with their pleasures—health and lessons with their play—and affection and forgiveness in their little bands. Thus their joys or their pleasures, their play and their companions, become their teachers. By an Infant School I would not mean a room where a hundred children may be crowded together in an unhealthy atmosphere. The situation and comforts of the school are almost as important as the nature of the instruction, or the character and disposition of the teacher. The situation should be airy and healthy, and the room well ventilated, with a small play-ground attached. For the play-ground is almost as necessary as the school, and both are regarded by the pupils as places of loved amusement, where the presence of the teacher inspires no terror, no restraint, but where he mingles in their sports and directs them as an elder playmate, while they regard him as such, and in return love him as a parent. And while all appears unrestrained mirth on the little yard, or the little green, and exercise gives play to the lungs, vigour to the system, and health to the blood, and the small gymnasium rings with the joy of the happy beings, no incident, however trifling, is suffered to pass unimproved, to "lead them from nature up to nature's God," to eradicate evil propensities, and cherish a love of truth, justice, mercy, and mutual love. Their sports, their tempers, their little wrongs or quarrels, all become monitors in the hands of the teacher, to render his infant charge the future good men or the excellent women. The school-room is only changing the scene of amusement, and tasks which I remember were to me the very essence of purgatory, pain, and punishment, are rendered to them an exquisite pastime. The pence table they carol merrily to the tune of "Nancy Dawson." With two or three sets of merry motions, they chant the formidable multiplication table, which affords them all the hilarity of chasing a butterfly, or romping on the meadow. Nothing is given them in the shape of a task, but every new lesson is a new pleasure. They are not so much taught by words, as by bringing the thing signified under their observation. I should be sorrow if the objects of Infant Schools should ever be so perverted as to attempt making them nurseries for infant prodigies. I care no more for precocity of talent, than I do for a tree that has blossomed before its time, the fruit of which is sure not to be worth the gathering. The design of Infant Schools is not to make ignorant parents *vain of* their children, but to make all parents *happy* in their children. It is not so much the *quantity* of what they learn that is to be regarded, as the *quality* of what they learn. They will learn cheerful obedience to their parents, their instructors, and their future masters;—they will learn the most important of all lessons to their after happiness, the government of their temper;—they will learn conscientiousness in all that they do;—they will learn sincerity;—they will learn habits of order, of cleanliness, and of courtesy;—they will learn method, and dislike confusion;—they will learn to bestow neatness, without vanity, on their persons; and order in all things. They will acquire a knowledge of geography, of the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral kingdoms, not as words, but as things that exist, and of which they have an understanding. They will acquire much to amuse and delight the fireside of their parents—much to surround it with edification and instruction. And instances have been, where they have there conveyed upon their lisping tongues, conviction and conversion to a parent's heart; while their Maker, from the lips of babes and of sucklings, perfected praise. They will be taught to feel that there is ever in the midst of them, a God of love, of mercy, and of power, who is angry with the wicked every day. They will be taught to love the creatures He has framed, to know His word, and revere its precepts—to love virtue for virtue's sake. It may be urged that much of the good produced by Infant Schools will be afterwards destroyed, by their mingling in other schools, in riper years, with children whose passions have been permitted to run wild, and especially where evil examples may exist on the part of the parents. That these will have a prejudicial effect to a certain extent is not to be denied. But for them there is also a preventive and a remedy. The Infant School is the nursery of the Sabbath School, where all the good begun will be strengthened and confirmed. Great as the moral and religious change is, which Sabbath Schools have effected upon society, their effect would have been tenfold, had not the moral culture of the child been so unheeded before sending it to the school, and its heart so hardened by years and neglect, as to render an abiding impression impossible. But religious instruction, whether implanted in our minds by our father's fireside, in the Infant School, or the Sabbath School, will never be forgotten. It will not depart from us. We may endeavour to shake it off, but it will struggle with us as Jacob with the angel. It will be a whisper in our souls for ever. We may grow up, and we may mingle with the world, and we may cast our Bibles far from us—and we may become wicked men and thoughtless women, but these whispers of eternal truth, though even thought to be forgotten by ourselves, will return and return again; and, when we wander in solitude, or lie sleepless on our pillow in the darkness of midnight they will rush back upon our guilty minds, in texts, in verses, and in chapters, long, long forgotten.

But to return to my history. I have said that the first of my education was the sayings which I heard from the lips of my father and mother. They gave an inclination to my spirit, as the hand bendeth the twig. They became to me as monitors that were always present. I often think that I hear the voice of my honoured father saying unto me still, "Whatsoever ye take in hand, *persevere* until ye accomplish it." That maxim became with me a principle, which has continued with me from childhood unto this day.

Before proceeding farther, it is necessary for me to say that my father was not only a poor man, but his occupation was one of the humblest which a peasant could occupy. He filled no higher situation than that of occasional barnman, and hedger and ditcher, upon a farm near Thornhill, in

Dumfriesshire. Neither was he what some would call a strong-minded man, nor did he know much of what the world calls education; but if he did not know what education was, he knew what the want of it was, and he was resolved that that was a knowledge which his children should never acquire. It was therefore his ambition to make them scholars to the extent of his means. But, when I state that his income did not exceed six shillings, you will agree with me that those means were not great. But my father's maxim—*persevere*, carried him over every difficulty. When my mother had said to him, as a quarter's wages became due—"Robin, I will never be able to stand thir bairns' schooling—sae mony o' them is a perfect ruination to me."

"Nonsense, Jenny," he would have said, in his own half-laughing, good-natured way; "the back is aye made fit for the burden. Just try another quarter, though we have to be put to our shifts to make it out. I'm no feared but that we will make it out someway or other. We have always done it yet, and what we have done, we can do again. Let us give them all the schooling we can, poor things; and the day will come when they will thank us, or mair than thank us, for all that we have wared upon them. O Jenny, woman! had I been a scholar, as I am not, instead of being the wife of a labouring man the day, ye would have been my wife—but a leddy."

A thousand times since, it has been a matter of wonder to me, how my parents, out of their niggard income, provided food, clothing, and education for their family, which consisted of five sons and four daughters, all of whom could not only read, write, and cast accounts; but, though I say it, who perhaps ought not to say it, his sons, in point of "*schooling*" in higher branches, were the equals, and perhaps more than the equals, of the richest farmer's sons in the neighbourhood. And never did a quarter-day arrive, on which any of the nine children of Robert and Janet Gray went before their teacher without his money in their hand, even as the brethren of Joseph, the patriarch, carried the money in their sacks' mouth. For it was not with my revered parents, as now a-days it is with too many, who regard paying a schoolmaster his fees, somewhat in the same light as paying a physician after his patient is dead, or a lawyer when the cause is lost.

Every Saturday night my father, though no scholar himself, caused us to bring home our books and our slates, and in his homely way he examined us—or rather he examined *them* (the books and the slates) as to the proficiency we had made. Of figures he did know something: grammar, he said, was a new invention, and there, for a time, his examinations were at fault, and he knew not how to judge or to decide. But (I being the eldest) as I grew up, he transferred the examination of my younger brothers, as regarded grammatical proficiency, to me. And well do I remember, that every weekly examination closed with the admonition—"Now, bairns, *persevere*. Ye see how your mother and me have to fecht late and early to keep ye at the schule; and it is my greatest ambition to see ye a' scholars. Learning is a grand thing; it is a fortune equal to the best estate in the kingdom—ay, even to the Duke o' Buccleugh's; but, oh, the want o' it is a great calamity, as none can tell ye better than your faither. Therefore bairns, *persevere;* always strive to be at the head o' your class, and if I live to be an auld man I shall see some o' ye leddies and gentlemen."

Thus the word *persevere* was for ever rung in our ears; and I believe, before any of us knew its meaning, we one and all put it in practice. And often, when the frost lay white upon the ground, before the sun got up, and even when the ice drew itself together like a piece of lace-work on the shallow pools, at the head of all the classes in our schools, which were just like stepping-stairs, a bare-footed and bare-legged laddie, but with hands and face as clean as the linen on his back, might have been seen as the dux of every class: and all those bare-feeted and bare-legged laddies were the bairns of Robert Gray.

"Persevere as ye are doing, Roderic," my old teacher used to say, "and ye will live to be an ornament to your country yet." I doubt all the ornament I have been to my country is hardly of a higher kind than that of a stucco or a paste-board figure on a mantel-piece, and perhaps not so much. However, be that as it may, I have the consolation to think that I have not passed through the world exactly as if I had been a cipher.

I know it is a difficult and a delicate thing for a man to write a sketch of his own life, without committing ship-wreck on the shoals and quicksands of egotism; but I will endeavour to steer clear of this, and while it is certain that I will "set down nought in malice," I trust that I shall be able to shew that I will "nothing extenuate."

My father's precept of *perseverance* carried me through my school-boy days gloriously, even as it had borne him through the expense of paying out of his scanty earnings for the education of nine children. I wanted three days of completing my thirteenth year when I left the school, but then I had begun to read Homer in Greek—I had read Horace in Latin, and I was acquainted with Euclid. My father was proud of me, my master was proud of me, for I had *persevered*. It was seldom that the son of a cotter, or the son of any one else, left the school at such an age so far advanced.

Many said that before I was twenty, they would see me in a pulpit—but they were mistaken. My father's habitual word *persevere* had taken too deep root in my heart, until it produced a sort of mental perpetual motion, which ever urged me onward—onward! and I found that the limits of a pulpit would never confine or contain me. I felt like a thing of life and happiness, that rejoiced and shook its wings beneath the sunshine of freedom, and I longed to expand my wings, even though they should fall or break under me.

I have said that I left school three days before I had completed my thirteenth year, and on that day that I did so, I was to become tutor in the family of a Colonel Mortimer, of the Honourable the East India Company's service. I was to be at once the playmate and instructor of two children; the one five, the other seven years of age—both boys. But his family contained another child—Jessy Mortimer—a lovely, dark-eyed girl of fifteen. The sun of an eastern clime had early drawn forth her beauty into ripeness, and although but two years older than myself, she was as a woman, while I was not only a mere boy, but, if I might use the expression, something between what might be termed a boy and a child; and certainly at the very age when children are most disagreeable to persons of a riper age. Yet, young as I was, from the very day that I beheld her, my soul took up its habitation in her eyes. I was dumb in her presence, I opened not my mouth. I was as a whisper, a shadow in the family—a piece of mechanism that performed the task designed for it. It was a presumptuous thing in the son of an humble barnman, to fix his eyes and his heart upon the daughter of an East India Colonel, and one two years older than himself; but the heart hath its vagaries, even as our actions have.

For the first two years that I was in the house of Colonel Mortimer, I may say that, save in my class-room, my voice was not heard above my breath. But, as my voluntary dumbness became more and more oppressive, so also did my affection, my devotion, for Jessy become the more intense. The difference between our ages seemed even to have become more marked, and I felt it. Yet, I began to think that her eyes looked upon me more tenderly, and the thought increased the devotion which for two years I had silently cherished. There seemed also a music, a spirit of gentleness and of kindness in her voice, which first inspired me with hope.

Thus did five years pass on, and during that period I hardly ventured to lift up my eyes in her presence; though throughout that period I had said within my heart, Jessy Mortimer *shall be my wife*, and that was a bold thought for the son of a barnman to entertain towards the daughter of a wealthy nabob. But throughout my whole life I had endeavoured to put into practice my father's counsel concerning perseverance; and most of all was I determined to follow it in the subject which was deepest in my heart.

I remember the first time I ever spoke to Jessy. When I say the first time I spoke to her, I mean the first time that my soul spoke to her through my lips. For more than five years we had exchanged the common civilities of society with each other; but the language of the heart is ever a sealed volume, when the cold, fashioned ceremonies of society have to be observed.

But to proceed—I was now upwards of eighteen, and the children under my tuition were to be removed to a public school. It was no disgrace to me that they were to be so removed, for I knew it from the beginning of my engagement. Yet I felt it as disgrace—as more than disgrace—because that it would tear me from the side of Jessy, on whom my eyes lived, and my mind dreamed. I had no wish to be a teacher, no ambition to become a minister; and her father had procured for me a situation as a clerk to a broker in London. But to me the thoughts of departure were terrible. Everything within and around the Colonel's establishment had become things that I loved. I loved them because Jessy loved them, because she saw them, touched them, was familiar with, and in the midst of them. They had become a portion of my *home*. I was unhappy at the thought of leaving them; but, beyond every other cause, my mind was without comfort at the thought of leaving her—it was hopeless, desolate. It was like causing a memory by force to perish in my heart.

It was in the month of September, I was wandering amidst the wooded walks upon her father's grounds. The rainbowed bronze of autumn lay upon the trees, deepening as it lay. The sun hung over the western hills; and the lark, after its summer silence, carolled over the heads of the last reapers of the season, to cheer their toil. A few solitary swallows twittered together, as if crying—"Come—come!" to summon them to a gathering and departure. The wood-pigeon cooed in the plantations, and as the twilight deepened, the plaintiveness of its strain increased. As I have said, I was then wandering in the wooded walks upon Colonel Mortimer's grounds, and my thoughts were far too deep for words. While I so wandered in lonely melancholy, my attention was aroused by the sound of footsteps approaching. I looked up, and Jessy Mortimer stood before me. I was too bashful to advance—too proud, too attached towards her, to retire.

We stood as though an electric spark had stricken both. I trembled, and my eyes grew dim; but I saw the rose die upon her cheeks. I beheld her ready to fall upon the ground—and, half unconscious of what I did, I sprang forward, and my arm encircled her waist.

"Jessy!—Miss Mortimer!" I cried; "pardon me—speak to me."

"Sir!" she exclaimed—"Roderic!" I approached her—I took her hand. We stood before each other in silence. She drew herself up—she fixed her eyes upon me. "Sir," she returned, "I will not pretend to misunderstand your meaning; but remember the difference that exists in our situations."

"I remember it, Miss Mortimer—I do. I will remember it, Jessy. There *is* a difference in our situations."

I sprang from her—I thought I felt her hand detaining mine; and, as I rushed away, I heard her exclaiming—"Stay, Roderic! stay!" But wounded pride forbade me—it withheld me. I thought of my father's and of my mother's words—"Persevere! persevere. And while I thought, I felt a something within, which whispered that I should one day speak to the daughter of Colonel Mortimer as her equal.

As I rushed away, I turned round for a moment to exclaim—"Farewell, Jessy!—we shall meet again!" Methought, as I hurried onward, I heard the accents of broken-hearted agony following after me; and through all, and over all, her voice was there. But I would not, I could not return. It was better to feel the arrow in my soul, than to have a new one thrust into it.

In a few days I took my departure towards London. I carried with me the letters of introduction which her father had given me. The broker to whom he recommended me was a Mr Stafford. He received me civilly, but at the same time most coldly, and pointing with his finger to the desk, said, "You will take your place there."

I did so, and in a very few weeks I became acquainted with the minutiæ of a broker's office. I perceived the situation which my senior clerks occupied, and I trusted one day to be as they were. I had heard them tell of our master having come to London with only half-a-crown in his pocket; and I thought of my father's maxim "persevere," and that I might do even as my master had done.

There were a dozen clerks; and three years had not passed, until I occupied one of the chief seats in the counting-house. I became a favourite with my employer, and one in whom he trusted.

During that period I had heard nothing of my early benefactor—nothing of Jessy—but my thoughts were full of them.

Now it came to pass, somewhat more than three yeat after I had arrived in London, that, one day as I was passing up Oldgate, a person stopped me, and exclaimed—"Roderic!"

"Esau!" I returned, for his name was Esau Taylor.

"The same," he replied; "your old schoolfellow."

Hunger sat upon his cheeks—starvation glared from his eyeballs—necessity fluttered around him as a ragged robe. The shoes upon his feet were the ghost of what they had been. His whole apparel was the laughing-stock of the wind; but my father had taught me to despise no one, however humble. It was a saying of his, "Look to the heart within a breast, and not to the coat that covers it;" and therefore I received Esau Taylor kindly. He was the son of an extensive farmer in our neighbourhood, and although I wonderen to find him in a situation so distressed, I recollected that in London such things were matters of every-day occurrence. Therefore I did not receive him coldly because of the shabbiness of his coat, and the misery of his appearance. I knew that I was the son of a barnman, and that my father's coat might be out at the elbows.

"Ha, Esau! my dear fellow," said I to him, "when did you come to town?"

"Several weeks ago," he replied.

"And what have you been doing?" said I.

"Nothing, nothing," he rejoined.

"Well," said I, "will you meet me in this house to-morrow? You were always good at figures, Esau; you can keep accounts. I think I can do something for you; and if you *persevere*, I doubt not but that you may arrive at the top of the tree, and become the managing clerk of the establishment."

"Thank you! thank you! thank you!" said Esau, grasping my hands as he spoke.

"Ah!" said I, "there is no necessity for thanks; I am a plain, blunt person. I did not know you personally in the place of my nativity, but I remember having seen you. I remember also your friends; and as a townsman, it will give me pleasure to know that I can be of service to you."

Esau grasped my hand, and he shook it as though he would have taken it from the elbow. I was certain that he would obtain the situation which I had in view for him. We sat down together—we talked of old times, when the feelings of our hearts were young; and, amongst other things, we spoke of Jessy Mortimer. I sat—I drank with him—we became happy together—we became mad together. My Jessy—Jessy Mortimer was before me. Her presence filled my thoughts—it overshadowed me. I could think of nothing else—I could speak of nothing else. I drank to her in bumpers; but Esau sat as calm as a judge with the black cap upon his head. I marvelled that the man had so little of what is called sympathy in his soul. He appeared before me as a dead man—a thing that moved merely as it was moved. I almost despised, and yet I trusted him, because he was connected with the part of the country to which I belonged.

Now, as I have informed you, we sat together, we drank together, and the name of Jessy Mortimer overcame me; but I sat till I forgot her, until I forgot myself—my companion—everything! In this state I was left sitting; and when consciousness returned, I was alone, bewildered. My companion had left me. My first sensation was that of shame—of burning shame. I felt that I had abused the time and the confidence of my employer, and the thought rendered me wretched.

It was two days before I ventured to call again at the office, where I had become a confidential clerk. My master passed me as I entered, but he neither spoke to nor noticed me. His coldness stung me. I felt my guiltiness burning over me. But my confusion was increased, when I learned that I was not only discharged, but that my place was to be supplied by Esau Taylor!

"Impossible!" I exclaimed.

"Deem it so," said my informant. "But you have cherished an adder that has stung you; and with all your knowledge, you are ignorant of the world, and of the people that live, breathe, and act in it. Take my counsel, and regad every man as though he were your enemy, until you have proved him to be your friend."

There was something in his words that more than restored my wandering thoughts into their proper channel.

I found that I had performed an act of kindness towards a villain—for I had not only treated Esau Taylor hospitably, but knowing that in London a good coat is of as much importance as a good character, I had furnished him with wearing apparel from my own wardrobe. A few days afterwards I met him in the Strand, arrayed in my garments, and he passed me with a supercilious air, as though I were a being only fit to be despised. I walked on as though I saw him not, conscious that, if he had a soul within him, it must be burning with the coals of fire which I had heaped upon his head.

I soon found it was much easier to lose a good situation than to obtain an indifferent one, and that one act of folly might accomplish what a thousand of repentances could not retrieve.

In a few months I found myself in a state of destitution; and while the coat which I had given to Esau Taylor, was still glossy upon his back—mine—my last remaining one—hung loose and forlorn upon my shoulders. Yet, although I then suffered from both cold and hunger, the words which my parents had made a portion of my character, departed not from me, and the words "*persevere!—persevere!*" were ever in my heart, kindling, glowing as a flame, until, in solitary enthusiasm, I have exclaimed aloud as I wandered (not having a roof to shelter me) upon the streets at midnight, 'I will persevere."

I was glad to accept of employment as copying clerk to a law stationer, at a salary of seven shillings a-week. It was a small sum, and I have often thoughtlessly wasted many times the amount since; but it made me happy then. It snatched, or rather it bought from the gripe of death—it relieved me from the pains and the terrors of want. My situation was now sufficiently humble, but my spirit was not broken; neither had I forgotten Jessy Mortimer, nor did I despair of one day calling her mine.

During the days of humiliation which I am recording, I was struck with an incident, which, although trifling in itself, I shall here relate; for from it I drew a lesson which encouraged me, and made me resolve, if possible, to carry my maxim into more active practice. Frequently on a Saturday afternoon, when the labours of the week were over, instead of returning to my wretched garret, (for which I paid a shilling a-week, and which contained no furniture save a shake-down bed and a broken chair,) I was wont to go out in the country, and to seek the silence and solitude of the woods and the green lanes. On such occasions,

My lodging was on the cold ground,"

and on the Sabbath mornings, I was wont to steal, as if unobserved, into the first country church, or rather place of worship, which I found open. I was there unknown; and in a congregation of English peasantry, the one half of whom were in their smock-frocks, there were none to observe the shabbiness of my garments. And in the plainness of every thing around me, there was something that accorded with my frame of mind, and in the midst of which I felt happier, and more at ease, than I could in the splendid cathedral, or the gaudy chapel of a great city. It was in the month of May, and the sweet blossom, like odoriferous snow, lay on the hawthorn. The lark sang over me its Sabbath hymn. The sun had just risen, and, like the canopy of a celestial couch on which an angel might have reposed, the clouds, like curtains of red and gold, seemed drawn asunder. I sat beneath a venerable elm tree, over which more than a hundred winters had passed; but their frosts had not nipped the majesty of its beauty. Above me a goldfinch chirmed and fed its young, and they seemed ready to break away upon the wing. It chirped to them, it fluttered from branch to branch, to allure them from the nest. One bolder than the rest ventured to follow, but ignorant of the strength of its wings, it fell upon the ground. The parent bird descended, and with strange motions mourned over it, anxiously striving again to teach it to ascend and regain its nest. My first impulse was to take up the little flutterer, to climb the tree, and replace it in the home which its first parent had built; but I lay and watched its efforts for a few minutes. Again and again by a bold effort it endeavoured to reach the lofty branch where its parent had poised its nest, but as often it fell upon the ground, and its little breast panted on the earth. At length it perched upon the lowest twig, and from it to others higher and higher, turning round proudly as it ascended, as if conversing with its parent, happy in what it was achieving, until the nest was regained.

"There," I exclaimed—"there is an example of perseverance; and a lesson is taught me by that little bird. It attempted too much at once, and its efforts were unsuccessful; it endeavoured to rise step by step, and it has gained the object it desired, That bird shall be my monitor, and I will endeavour to rise step by step, even as it has done."

I returned to London, and as I went, the attempts of the little bird were the text on which my thoughts dwelt. By sedulous attention to my duties, I began to rise in the esteem of my employer, the law stationer, and he increased my salary from seven shillings to a guinea a-week. I said unto myself, that, like the young bird, I had gained a higher branch.

Within twelve months he obtained me a situation in the office of an eminent solicitor, where I was engaged at a salary of a hundred pounds a-year. This was the scaling of another branch; and I again found myself in circumstances

equal to those I had enjoyed previous to the treachery of Esau Taylor. I did not, in order to ingratiate myself with my employer, practice the *bowing* system, with which my countrymen have at times been accused; but I strove to be useful, I studied to oblige, and was rewarded with his confidence and favour.

It became a part of my employment to draw up abstracts of pleadings. On one occasion, I had drawn out a brief, which was to be placed in the hands of one of the most eminent counsel at the bar. He was struck with the manner in which the task was executed, and was pleased to pronounce it the clearest, the ablest, and best arranged brief that had ever been placed in his hands. He inquired who had drawn it out; and my employer introduced me to him. He spoke to me kindly and encouragingly, and recommended me to *persevere*. The word rekindled every slumbering energy of my soul. I had always endeavoured to do so, but now stronger impulses seemed to stir within me, and there was a confidence in my hopes that I had never felt before. He suggested that I should prepare myself for the bar, and generously offered to assist me. Through his interest, and the liberality of my master, I was admitted a student of the Inner Temple. My perseverance was now more necessary than ever, and again I thought of the little bird and its successful efforts. I had gained another branch, and the topmost bough to which I aspired was now visible.

I allowed myself but five hours out of the twenty-four for repose, the rest I devoted to hard study, and to the duties of assistant reporter to a daily newspaper. But often, in the midst of my studies, and even while noting down the strife of words in Parliament, thoughts of Jessy Mortimer came over me, and her image was pictured on my mind, like a guardian angel revealing for a moment the brightness of its countenance. My hopes became more sanguine, and I felt an assurance that the day would come when I should call her mine.

I had many privations to encounter, and many difficulties to overcome, but for none did I turn aside; my watchword was "onward," and in due time I was called to the bar. I expected to struggle for years with the genteel misery of a briefless barrister, but the thought dismayed me not.

Before, however, I proceed farther with my own career, I shall notice that of Esau Taylor. There was no species of cunning, of treachery, or of meanness, of which he was not capable. There was none to which he did not resort. His brother clerks hated him; for, to his other properties, he added that of a low tale-bearer. But he was plausible as Lucifer, and with his smooth tongue and fair professions, he succeeded in ingratiating himself into the chief place in his master's confidence; and eventually was placed by him at the head of his establishment; and, in order further to reward what he considered his singular worth and honesty, he permitted him to have a small share in the firm. But Esau was not one of those whom a small share, or any portion short of the whole, would satisfy. This he accomplished more easily and more speedily than it is possible that even he, with all his guilty cunning, had anticipated.

The merchant from whose employment he had supplanted me, and over whom his plausibility and pretended honesty had gained such an ascendency, had a daughter—an only child—who, about the time of Taylor's being admitted into a sort of partnership returned from a boarding-school in Yorkshire. He immediately conceived that the easiest way to obtain both the father's business and his wealth, would be by first securing the daughter's hand. Of anything even bordering upon affection, his sordid soul was incapable; but to obtain his object he could assume its appearance, and he could employ the rhapsodies which at times pass for its language. The maiden was young and inexperienced, and with just as much of affectation as made her the more likely to be entangled in the snares of a plausible hypocrite, who adapted his conversation to her taste. The girl began to imagine that she loved him—perhaps she did—but more possibly it was a morbid fancy which she mistook for affection, and which he well knew how to encourage.

She became pensive, sighed, and drooped like a lily that is nipped by the frost, and seemed ready to leave her father childless; and the merchant, to save his daughter, consented to her union with Esau Taylor, his managing clerk and nominal partner.

The old man lived but a few months after their union, bequeathing to them his fortune and his business; and within a year and a half his daughter followed him to the grave; to which, it was said, she was hurried through the cruelty and neglect of her husband.

Esau was now a rich man, a great man, and withal a bad man—one whose heart was blacker than the darkness of the grave, where his injured, I believe I may say his murdered wife was buried.

We had not met each other for more than five years, and it is possible that he had half forgotten me, or, if he remembered me, considered me unworthy of a thought.

I have told you that I was called to the bar, and for ten months I attended the Courts in my gown and wig, sitting in the back benches, and listening to the eloquence of my seniors, with a light pocket, and frequently a heavy heart.

I was sitting one evening in my chambers, as they were called—though they contained nothing but an old writing desk, two chairs, and a few law books; I was poring over a volume of olden statutes, mincing a biscuit, and sipping a glass of cold water, when the bell rang, and on opening the door my old master, the solicitor, stood before me, and he had what appeared to be a brief in his hand. My heart began to beat audibly in my bosom.

"Well, Roderic," said he, entering, "I always promised that I would do what I could for you, and now I am determined to bring you out. Here is a case that may make your fortune. You will have scope for argument, feeling, declamation. If you do not produce an impression in it, you are not the person I take you for. Don't tremble—don't be too diffident; but, as I say to you, throw your soul into it, and I will answer for it making your fortune. Here are fifty guineas as a retaining fee, and it is not unlikely that my fair client to-morrow may give you fifty more as a refresher."

"Fifty guineas!" I involuntarily exclaimed, and my eyes glanced upon the money. I felt as though my fortune were already made, and that I should be rich for ever.

"Come, Roderic," said he, "don't think about the retainer, but think of the case—think of getting another."

"What is the case?" I inquired.

"That," replied he, "your brief, which is as clearly and fully drawn up as if you had done it yourself, will explain to you. In the meantime, I may state, that your client, the defendant, is a young lady of matchless beauty, great fortune and accomplishments. When you see her, you will be inspired. She is the orphan daughter, and now the sole surviving child of an officer, who had extensive dealings with a house in the city. Of late years the prosecutor was his broker. Some time after the father's death, the prosecutor made overtures of marriage to the defendant, which she rejected. He has now, stimulated by revenge, set up a fictitious claim for twenty thousand pounds, which he alleges her father owed to the house of which he is now at the head; and for this claim he now drags my client into court. Now, I trust that we shall not only be able to prove that the debt is fictitious, but to establish that the documents which he holds, bearing the Colonel's signature, are forgeries. It is a glorious case for you—here is your brief, and I shall call on you again in the morning."

I took the brief from his hand, glanced my eyes upon the back of it, and read the words—"*Taylor* against *Mortimer*."

'Taylor against Mortimer!" I exclaimed, starting from my seat; "what Taylor?—what Mortimer? Not Jessy—my Jessy? Not the villain, Esau?—the supplanter——the——"

"Hold, hold," said the solicitor, in surprise; "such are, indeed, the names of the parties; but, if you are in an ecstasy already, I must take the brief to one who will read it soberly."

"No!" I cried, grasping the brief in my hand—"take back your fee—I will plead this cause for love."

"Keep the money—keep the money," said he, drily; it will be of as much service to you, in the meantime, as love. But let me know the cause of this enthusiasm."

I unbosomed my soul to him. I did not see Miss Mortimer until the day of trial, in the Court; and, when I rose to plead for her, she started—the word "Roderic!" escaped from her lips, and tears gushed into her bright eyes. It was at the same moment that Esau Taylor saw and recognised me—his eyes quailed beneath my gaze; his guilt gushed to his face. I commenced my address to the jury—I drew the picture of a fiend. Taylor trembled. Every individual in the Court was already convinced of his guilt. He endeavoured to escape amidst the crowd. I called upon the officers to seize him. I gained the cause, and with it, also, won the hand of Jessy Mortimer, to obtain which, from boyhood I had persevered. Taylor was committed to prison, to stand his trial for the forgeries; but, before the day of trial came, he was buried within the prison-walls, with disgrace for his epitaph.

THE IRISH REAPER.

Some years ago, I was proceeding from Runcorn to Manchester, in one of the passage-boats which ply upon the Duke of Bridgewater's canal. There could not be less than a hundred passengers, and they were of as motley a description as the imagination of man could conceive even in a dream. The boats exactly resemble a long, low, flat-roofed wooden house; but sufficiently lofty for a middle-sized person to stand erect between the floor and the roof, or rather the deck. At one end sat about a dozen Primitive Methodists, alternately reading passages of Scripture, or bursting forth, at the extreme pitch of their voice, into a squall of music, singing hymn upon hymn, till my very ears ached, and the timbers of the boat might have started. Near them sat a number of young, rosy-cheeked Welsh women, staring at the vocalists with a look of wondering vacancy, that the goats on their own mountains could not have surpassed. There were, also, manufacturers' wives and children returning from a seven days' visit to Runcorn, for the benefit of a salt-water dip in the Mersey; and six or eight prim, sober, sleek, silent, well-dressed Quakers; with a more than sprinkling of the boys of the Emerald Isle. The loud laugh of one of them was ever and anon heard above the shrill music of the Ranters. He was about five feet seven inches high, and exceedingly strong and well-made. He wore an old greatcoat, of a yellowish blanket colour, and a hat, the crown of which had fallen in with service, and its brim was equally turned up before and behind, and on both sides. His feet were thrust into a pair of brogues of true Irish manufacture, which, with a pair of coarse blue worsted stockings and corduroy inexpressibles, completed his outward man. He carried an apparently empty sack under his arm, and was surrounded by about a dozen of his countrymen, who seemed to regard him as an oracle, heartily echoing back his boisterous laughter, and exclaiming—"Well done, Mister M'Carthy!—faith and it's you that's your mother's own son, at iny rate."

O'Connell had sailed from Liverpool on the previous day, and his countrymen were discussing his political merits.

"Why, bad luck to ye," exclaimed our hero with the great-coat, in answer to one who had held forth in praise of the counsellor; "and is it you, Mick Behan, that says every man in Ireland should pay the O'Connell rint?—but I'll tell you a bit of a parable, as father O'Shee says, and a parable, too, of my own natural mother's making. 'Larry' says she to me, 'Larry M'Carthy, don't be after planting those big potaties for seed; for they've a hole in their heart a little Christian might slape in!'"

"You're no better thin a Sassenach, Larry," interrupted the aforesaid Mick; "can't you spake your maneing like a man, if you have any maneing at all, at all."

This was like to have ended in an Irish row in reality—though the majority evidently sided with Mister Larry M'Carthy, not because they agreed with him in opinion, but because, as afterwards appeared, he was their master or employer. The disputants paused for a moment, and a loud groan, as if from one in great bodily pain, mingled with the wailings of a woman, was heard from the farther corner of the boat. Larry turned round, to use his own expression, "like a flash of lightning," and the next moment he stood by the side of the sufferer, who was a tall, bony-looking figure; but, save the skin that covered them, there was little of his mortal man but the bones left. It was only necessary to look on his features, wasted as they were, to tell that he, too, was an Irishman. A young wife sat beside him, whose countenance resembled beauty personifying sorrow; she had a child at her breast, and two others the eldest not more than five years of age, stood by her knee. Larry looked upon the group, and his heart was touched.

"Och! and what may be ailing ye, countryman?" said he; "sure and ye wouldn't be after dying among friends, would ye?"

"Ohon! and is it a friend that would be asking after my own Patrick?" replied the poor wife; "sure, then, and he is ill, and we're all ill togidder; and it is six blessed months since he earned the bridth of tinpinny. Oh! blackness on the day that the rheumatis came on him"——

"Sure now and is that all," interrupted Larry; "and, belike, the doctors have been chating you; for, I tell you, honey, and you, too, Patrick, those 'natomy chaps know no more about the rheumatis than holy Solomon knew about stame-boats. But, belike, I'm the lad that disn't know neither; but, maybe, your chating yoursilf if ye think so. I'll tell ye what it is; the rheumatis is a wandering wind between the flesh and the bone; and, more than that, there is no way to cure it, but to squaze it out at the ends of the fingers or toes."

"Oh! my childer's sorrow on it, thin!" replied the suffering man's wife; "but, more and above the rheumatis, Patrick got his leg broke last February"——

"Ay, splintered, honey," added the husband; "and the doctors, bad luck be wid them, can't make nothing on't; and I am now gone to the great Salford bone doctor."

"And, maybe, he won't be curing the bit bone without the money," said Larry, with an expression of sympathy.

The sufferer shook his head, and was silent; his wife burst into tears.

"I will work, I will beg, I will die for my Patrick," she exclaimed, and pressed the child closer to her breast.

"You had better be barring the dying, honey," returned Larry; "and wouldn't a raffle, think ye, among friends, be more gintale thin begging among strangers?"

"Ohon! and is it *friends* you say?" replied she.

"Yes, sure, and it is *friends* that I say," answered Larry; "and a raffle is what no gintleman need be ashamed on."

The boat at this moment stopped opposite an inn at the side of the canal; Larry borrowed a quart measure from the skipper, and sprang ashore. In a few minutes he returned with a quantity of rum, and, handing it first to the wife, and then to her lame husband, said—"Come, warm

up thy ould bones with a drop of the cratur." He called the rest of his countrymen around him, and handed the liquor to each. When gathered together, there might be about sixteen or eighteen of them in all.

"Arrah, now, and these are all my men," said Mister Larry M'Carthy, with a look of comical consequence, to his infirm countrymen; "and where would you be finding better? We are gone up to a bit of work in Lancashire; for the Inglish are no better than born childer at *our* work;* and," raising the liquor to his head, he added, "here's the Holy Virgin be with us, countryman, and better luck to your bad leg; and, should it ever be mended at all—though you may'nt be good for much at *hood-work* iny more, you have still a stout bone for a *barrow*—and you won't be forgetting to ask for Larry M'Carthy. And, now, boys," continued he, turning to his workmen, "here is this poor man, and, more than this, I'm saying, our own lawful countryman, with the rheumatis and a broken leg, and his wife, too, as you see, and those three little cherubims, all starving, to be sure, and he going to the doctor's without a penny! Sure you won't disgrace ould Ireland—just look at the childer—and I say that a raffle is the gintale way of doing the thing."

So saying, he thrust his hand into his pocket, and pulled out a small canvass bag well filled with silver, and tied round the mouth with a strong cord. He took off his indescribable brown hat; he threw in a piece or two of silver, and went round, shaking it among his countrymen. Each took out a bag similar to Larry's, and threw his mite into the hat. He then, without counting them, emptied its contents into the lap of the poor woman; and I should think, from their appearance, they must have amounted to thirty or forty shillings. She burst into tears. The lame man grasped his hand, and endeavoured to thank him.

"Don't be after spakeing," said Larry; "did you think we warn't Christians?"

Such was the Irish raffle. Larry instantly resumed his jokes, his jests, and his arguments; but I could do nothing during the rest of the passage, but think of the good Samaritan, and admire Mister Larry M'Carthy.

In the September of 1834, I was wandering by the side of a country churchyard, situated near the banks of the Tyne. The sun had gone down, and the twilight was falling grey upon the graves. I saw a poor-looking man, whose garments fluttered in tatters with the evening breeze, and who, by his appearance, seemed to be an Irish reaper, rise from among the tombs. He repeatedly drew the sleeve of his coat across his eyes, and I could hear him sobbing heavily, as though his heart would burst. As we approached each other, I discovered that he was my old canal-boat companion, the then merry and kind-hearted Larry M'Carthy; but no more like the Larry I had then seen him, than a funeral to a bridal.

His frame was wasted to a skeleton, and hunger and misery glistened in his eyes together.

"Ha!" said I, accosting him, "is it possible that sorrow can have laid its heavy hand upon the light heart of Larry M'Carthy?"

"Sure," said he, drying away the tears that ran down his wan and want-worn cheeks, "and it is true, and too true, and heavy is the hand, sure enough; but not so heavy as it should be, or it would be weighing me into that grave." He pointed to the grave I had seen him leave, and added, "But how do you know me, sir—and who tould ye my name—as I don't know yours?—for, sure, and mine is Larry M'Carthy, as my father and mother, and his rivirence, wid my natarel sponsors, to boot, all, every one of thim, say and affirm."

I reminded him of the canal-boat and the raffle, and inquired the cause of his distress, and his visit to the grave.

"Arrah, master," said he, "and you touch a sore place when you ask me to tell it. Perhaps you don't know—for how should you—that, not long after the time you spake of in the canal-boat, I came down to what ye call the Borders here, to a bit of navigating work that was to be a long job. I lodged wid a widow—a dacent ould woman, that had a daughter they called Mary—and, och! you may be thinking that ever Mary had an equal, but it's wrong that ye are if ye think so. Her eyes were like drops of dew upon the shamrock; and, although she was not Irish but Scotch, it was all one; for, ye know, the Scotch and Irish are one man's childer. But, at iny rate, she had a true Irish heart; and, but for the sae or the channel, as they call it, she would have been Irish as well as me. The more I saw of Mary, I loved her the more—better than a bird loves the green tree. She loved me, too; and we were married. The ould woman died a few weeks before Mary presented me with two little Larrys. I might have called them both Larry; for they were as like each other as your two eyes, and both of them as like me, too, as any two stars in the blessed firmament are like each other, where nobody can see a difference.

"Mary made the best wife in Christendom; and, when our little cherubs began to run about our knees, and to lisp and spake to us, a thousand times have I clasped Mary to my breast, and blessed her as though my heart would burst with joy. 'Sure,' I used to say, 'what would my own mother have said, had her ould eyes been witness to the happiness of her son, Larry M'Carthy?'

"But, often the thought came staleing over me, that my happiness was too like a drame to last long; and sure and it was a drame, and a short one, too. A cruel, mortal fever came to the village, and who should it seize upon but my little darlints. It was hard to see them dying together, and my Mary wept her bright eyes blind over them. But bad luck was upon me. The 'pothecary tould us as how our lovely childer would die; and, on the very day that he said so, the wife that was dearer to me than ould Ireland to Saint Patrick, lay down on the bed beside them—and och, sir! before another sun looked in at our window, a dying mother lay between her dead childer. I wished that I might die too; and, within three days, I followed my wife and my little ones together to the same grave. It was this arm that lowered them into the cold earth—into the narrow house—and, sure, it has been weak as a child's since. My strength is buried in their grave. I have wrought but little since; for I cannot. I have no home now; and I take a light job anywhere when it comes in my way. Every year, at reaping time, I visit their grave, and bring with me a bit of shamrock to place over it, and that it may be a mark where to bury me, should I die here, as I hope I will."

Within ten days after this, I beheld the body of the once lively and generous-hearted Larry M'Carthy consigned to the grave, by the side of his wife and children.



* Laary and his countrymen were all *navigators*, as they are called, or rather excavators, employed in digging canals, railways, docks, &c.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

EDMUND AND HELEN.

A METRICAL TALE.

Canto First.

Come, sit thee by me, love, and thou shalt hear
A tale may win a smile and claim a tear—
A plain and simple story, told in rhyme,
As sang the minstrels of the olden time.
No idle Muse I'll needlessly invoke—
No patron's aid, to steer me from the rock
Of cold neglect round which oblivion lies;
But, loved one, I will look into thine eyes,
From which young poesy first touched my soul,
And bade the burning words in numbers roll;—
They were the light in which I learned to sing;
And still to thee will kindling fancy cling—
Glow at thy smile, as when, in younger years,
I've seen thee smiling through thy maiden tears,
Like a fair floweret bent with morning dew,
While sunbeams kissed its leaves of loveliest hue.
Thou wert the chord and spirit of my lyre—
Thy love the living voice that breathed—"aspire!"—
That smoothed ambition's steep and toilsome height,
And in its darkest paths was round me, light.
Then, sit thee by me, love, and list the strain,
Which, but for thee, had still neglected lain.

II.

Didst thou ere mark, within a beauteous vale,
Where sweetest wild-flowers scent the summer gale,
And the blue Tweed, in silver windings, glides,
Kissing the bending branches on its sides,
A snow-white cottage, one that well might seem
A poet's picture of contentment's dream?
Two chestnuts broad and tall embower the spot,
And bend in beauty o'er the peaceful cot;
The creeping ivy clothes its roof with green,
While round the door the perfumed woodbine's seen
Shading a rustic arch; and smiling near,
Like rainbow fragments, blooms a rich parterre;
Grey, naked crags—a steep and pine-clad hill—
A mountain chain and tributary rill—
A distant hamlet and an ancient wood,
Begirt the valley where the cottage stood.
That cottage was a young Enthusiast's home,
Ere blind ambition lured his steps to roam;
He was a wayward, bold, and ardent boy,
At once his parents' grief—their hope and joy.
Men called him Edmund.—Oft his mother wept
Beside the couch where yet her schoolboy slept,
As, starting in his slumbers, he would seem
To speak of things of which none else might dream.

III.

Adown the vale, a stately mansion rose,
With arboured lawns, like visions of repose;
Serene in summer loveliness, and fair
As if no passion e'er was dweller there
Save innocence and love; for they alone
Within the smiling vale of peace were known.
But fairer and more lovely far than all,
Like Spring's first flowers, was Helen of the Hall—
The blue-eyed daughter of the mansion's lord,
And living image of a wife adored,
But now no more—for, e'er a lustrum shed
Its smiles and sunshine o'er the infant's head,
Death, like a passing spirit, touched the brow
Of the young mother—and the father now
Lived as a dreamer on his daughter's face,
That seemed a mirror wherein he could trace
The long lost past—the eyes of love and light,
Which his fond soul had worshipped, ere the night
Of death and sorrow sealed those eyes in gloom—
Darkened his joys and whelmed them in the tomb.

IV.

Young Edmund and fair Helen, from the years
Of childhood's golden joys and passing tears,
Were friends and playmates; and together they
Across the lawn, or through the woods, would stray.
While he was wont to pull the lilies fair,
And weave them, with the primrose, round her hair;—
Plait toys of rushes, or bedeck the thorn
With daisies sparkling with the dews of morn;
While she, these simple gifts would grateful take—
Loved for their own and for the giver's sake.
Or, they would chase the butterfly and bee
From flower to flower—shouting in childish glee;
Or hunt the cuckoo's echo through the glade,
Chasing the wandering sound from shade to shade.
Or, if she conned the daily task in vain,
A word from Edmund made the lesson plain.

V.

Thus years rolled by in innocence and truth,
And playful childhood melted into youth,
As dies the dawn in rainbows, ray by ray
In blushing beauty stealing into day.
And thus too passed, unnoticed and unknown,
The sports of childhood, fleeting one by one,
Like broken dreams, of which we neither know
From whence they come, nor mark we when they go.
Yet would they stray where Tweed's fair waters glide,
As we have wandered—fondly, side by side;
And when dun gloaming's shadows o'er it stole
As silence visible—until the soul
Grew tranquil as the scene—then would they trace
The deep'ning shadows on the river's face—

A voiceless world, where glimmered, downward far,
Inverted mountain, tree, and cloud, and star.
'Twas Edmund's choicest scene, and he would dwell
On it, till he grew eloquent, and tell
Its beauties o'er and o'er; until the maid
Knew every gorgeous tint and mellowed shade
Which evening from departed sunbeams threw,
And as a painter on the waters drew.

VI.

Or, when brown Autumn touched the leaves with age,
The heavens became the young Enthusiast's page
Wherein his fancy read; and they would then,
Hand locked in hand, forsake the haunts of men;
Communing with the silver queen of night,
Which, as a spirit, shone upon their sight,
Full orbed in maiden glory; and her beams
Fell on their hearts, like distant shadowed gleams
Of future joy and undefined bliss—
Half of another world and half of this.
Then, rapt in dreams, oft would he gazing stand,
Grasping in his her fair and trembling hand,
And thus exclaim—"Helen, when I am gone,
When that bright moon shall shine on you alone,
And but *one* shadow on the river fall—
Say, wilt thou then these heavenly hours recall?
Or read, upon the fair moon's smiling brow
The words we've uttered—those we utter now?
Or think, though seas divide us, I may be
Gazing upon that glorious orb with thee
At the same moment—hearing, in its rays,
The hallowed whisperings of early days!
For, oh, there is a language in its calm
And holy light, that hath a power to balm
The troubled spirit, and, like memory's glass,
Make by-gone happiness before us pass."

VII.

Or, they would gaze upon the evening star,
Blazing in beauteous glory from afar,
Dazzling its kindred spheres, and bright o'er all,
Like Love on the Eternal's coronal;
Until their eyes its rays reflected threw
-n glances eloquent—though words were few;
For well I ween, it is enough to feel
The power of such an hour upon us steal,
As if a holy spirit filled the air,
And nought but love and silence might be there—
Or whispers, which, like Philomel's soft strains,
Are only heard to tell that silence reigns.
Yet, he at times would break the hallowed spell
And thus in eager rhapsodies would dwell
Upon the scene:—"O'er us rolls world on world,
Like the Almighty's regal robes unfurled;—
O'erwhelming, dread, unbounded, and sublime—
Eternity's huge arms that girdle time
And roll around it, marking out the years
Of this dark spot of sin amidst the spheres!
For, oh, while gazing upon worlds so fair,
'Tis hard to think that sin has entered there—
That those bright orbs which now in glory swim,
Should e'er for man's ingratitude be dim!
Bewildered, lost, I cast mine eyes abroad,
And read on every star the name of—God!
The thought o'erwhelms me!—Yet, while gazing on
Yon star of love, I cannot feel alone;
For wheresoe'er my after lot may be,
That evening star shall speak of home and thee.
Fancy will view it o'er yon mountain's brow
That sleeps in solitude before us now;
While memory's lamp shall kindle at its rays,
And light the happy scenes of other days—
Such scenes as this; and then the very breeze
That with it bears the odour of the trees,
And gathers up the meadow's sweet perfume,
From off my clouded brow shall chase the gloom
Of sick'ning absence—for the scented air
To me wafts back remembrance, as the prayer
Of lisping childhood is remembered yet,
Like living words, which we can ne'er forget."

VIII.

Till now, their life had been one thought of joy,
A vision time was destined to destroy—
As dies the dewy net-work on the thorn,
Before the sunbeams, with the mists of morn.
Thus far their lives in one smooth current ran—
They loved, yet knew not when that love began,
And hardly knew they loved; though it had grown
A portion of their being, and had thrown
Its spirit o'er them; for its shoots had sprung
Up in their hearts, while yet their hearts were young;
Even like the bright leaves of some wandering seed,
Which Autumn's breezes bear across the mead,
O'er naked wild and mountain, till the wind
Dropping its gift, a stranger flower we find.
And with their years the kindling feeling grew,
But grew unnoticed, and no change they knew;
For it had grown, even as a bud displays
Its opening beauties—one on which we gaze
Yet note no seeming change from hour to hour,
But find, at length, the bud a lovely flower.

IX.

Thus, thrice six golden summers o'er them fled,
And on their hearts their rip'ning influence shed;
Till one fair eve, when from the gorgeous west,
Cloud upon cloud in varied splendour pressed
Around the setting sun, which blinding shone
On the horizon like its Maker's throne;
Till veiled in glory, and its parting ray
Fell as a blessing on the closing day—
Or, like the living smile of Nature's God,
Upon his creatures shedding peace abroad.
The early lark had ceased its evening song,
And silence reigned amidst the feathered throng;
Save where the chaffinch, with unvarying strain,
Its short, sweet line of music trilled again;
Or where the stock-dove, from the neighbouring grove,
Welcomed the twilight with the voice of love—
Then Edmund wandered by the trysting-tree,
Where, at that hour, the maid was wont to be;—
But now she came not. Deep'ning shade on shade,
The night crept round him; still he lonely strayed;
Gazed on the tree till grey its foliage grew,
And stars marked midnight, ere he slow withdrew.
Another evening came—a third passed on—
And wondering, fearing, still he stood alone,
Trembling and gazing on her father's hall,
Where lights were glitt'ring as a festival;
And, as with cautious step he ventured near,
Sounds of glad music burst upon his ear,
And figures glided in the circling dance,
While wild his love and poverty at once
Flashed through his bursting heart, and smote him now
As if a thunderbolt had scorched his brow,
And scathed his very spirit; as he stood,
Mute as despair—the ghost of solitude!

X.

Strange guests were revelling at the princely hall—
Proud peers and ladies fair; but, chief of all,
A rich and haughty knight, from Beaumont side,
Who came to woo fair Helen as his bride;

Or, rather from her father ask her hand,
And woo no more; but deem consent, command.
He too was young, high-born, and bore a name
Sounding with honours bought, though not with fame;
And the consent he sought, her father gave,
Nor feared the daughter of his love would brave
In aught his wishes, or oppose his will;
For she had ever sought it, as the rill
Seeketh the valley or the ocean's breast;
And, ere his very wishes were expressed,
She strove to trace their meaning in his eyes,
Even as a seaman readeth on the skies
The coming breeze, the calm, or brooding gale,
Then spreads the canvass wide, or reefs the sail.
Nor did he doubt, that still her heart was free
As the fleet mountain deer, which as a sea
The wilderness surrounds; for she had grown
Up as a desert flower, that he alone
Had watched and cherished; and the blinding pride
Of wealth and ancestry, had served to hide,
From him alone, what long within the vale
Had been the rustic gossip's evening tale.
That such presumptuous love could e'er employ
The secret fancies of the cottage boy,
He would have held impossible—or smiled
At the bold madness of a thought so wild—
Reading his daughter's spirit by his own,
Which reared an ancient name as virtue's throne
And only stooped to look on meaner things,
Whose honours echoed not the breath of kings.

XI.

Wild were the passions—fierce the anguish now,
Which tore the very soul, and clothed the brow
Of the Enthusiast;—while gaunt Despair,
Its heavy, cold, and iron hand laid bare,
And in its grasp of torture clenched his heart,
Till, one by one, the life-drops seemed to start
In agony unspeakable;—within
His breast its freezing shadow—dark as Sin,
Gloomy as Death, and desolate as Hell,
Like starless midnight on his spirit fell,
Burying his soul in darkness;—while his Love,
Fierce as a whirlwind, in its madness strove
With stern Despair, as on the field of wrath
The wounded warhorse, panting, strives with Death.
Then as the conflict weakened, Hope would dash
Across his bosom, like the death-winged flash
That flees before the thunder; yet its light,
Lived but a moment, leaving deeper night
Around the strife of passions; and again
The struggle maddened, and the hope was vain.

XII.

He heard the maidens of the valley say,
How they, upon their lady's wedding-day,
Would strew her path with flowers, and o'er the lawn
Join in the dance, to eve from early dawn;
While, with a smile and half-deriding glance,
Some sought him as their partner in the dance:
And peasant railers, as he passed them by,
Laughed—whispered—laughed again, and mocked a sigh.
But he disdained them; and his heaving breast
Had no room left to feel their vulgar jest;
For it ran o'er with agony and scorn,
As water dropping on a rock, was borne.

XIII.

'Twas a fair summer night, and the broad moon
Sailed in calm glory through the skies of June;
Pouring on earth its pale and silv'ry light,
Till roughest forms were softened to the sight;
And on the westren hills its faintest ray
Kissed the yet ruddy streaks of parted day.
The stars were few, and twinkling, dimly shone,
For the bright moon in beauty reigned alone;
One cloud lay sleeping 'neath the breathless sky,
Bathed in the limpid light; while, as the sigh
Of secret love, silent as shadows glide,
The soft wind played among the leafy pride
Of the green trees, and scarce the aspen shook;
A babbling voice was heard from every brook;
And down the vale, in murmurs low and long,
Tweed poured its ancient and unwearied song.
Before, behind, around, afar and near,
The wakeful landrail's watchword met the ear.
Then Edmund leaned against the hallowed tree,
Whose shade had been their temple, and where he
Had carved their names in childhood, and they yet
Upon the rind were visible. They met
Beneath its branches spreading like a bower,
For months—for years; and the impassioned hour
Of silent deep deliciousness, and bliss
Pure as an angel's—fervid as the kiss
Of a young mother on her first-born's brow—
Fled in their depth of joy, they knew not how;
Even as the Boreal meteor mocks the eye,
Living a moment on the gilded sky,
And dying in the same, ere we can trace
Its golden hues, its form, or hiding place.
But now to him each moment dragged a chain,
And time itself seemed weary. The fair plain,
Where the broad river, in its pride, was seen,
With stately woods and fields of loveliest green
To him was now a wilderness; and even
Upon the everlasting face of heaven
A change had passed—its very light was changed,
And shed forth sickness; for he stood estranged
From all that he had loved, and every scene
Spoke of despair where love and joy had been.
Thus desolate he stood, when, lo! a sound
Of voices and gay laughter echoed round.
Then, straight a party issued from the wood,
And, ere he marked them, all before him stood.
He gazed—he startled—shook—exclaimed aloud,
"Helen!"—then burst away! and as a shroud
The sombre trees concealed him; but a cry
Of sudden anguish, echoed a reply
To his wild word of misery, though he
Heard not its tone of heart-pierced agony.
She, whom his fond soul worshipped as its bride,
He saw before him, by her wooer's side,
Midst other proud ones;—'twas a sight like death—
Death on his very heart!—The balmy breath
Of the calm night struck on his brow with fire;
For each fierce passion, burning in its ire,
Raged in his bosom as a with'ring flame,
And scarce he knew he madly breathed her name;
But, as a bark before the tempest tossed,
Rushed from the scene, exclaiming wildly—"Lost!"

XIV.

Two days of sorrow slowly round had crept
And Helen lonely in her chamber wept;
Shunning her father's guests, and shunning, too,
The glance of rage and scorn, which now he threw
Upon the child that e'er to him had been
Dear as immortal hope, when o'er the scene
Of human life, death, slow as twilight, lowers;—
She was the sunlight of his widowed hours—
The all he loved—the glory of his eye—
His hope by day—the sole remaining tie
That linked him with the world; and rudely now
That link seemed broken; and upon his brow

Wrath lay in gloom; while, from his very feet,
He spurned the being he was wont to meet
With outstretched arms of fondness and of pride,
While all the father's feelings in a tide
Of transport gushed. But now she wept alone,
Shunning and shunned; and still the bitter tone
In which she heard her Edmund breathe her name,
Rang in her heaving bosom; and the flame
That lit his eye with frenzy and despair,
Upon her naked spirit seemed to glare
With an accusing glance; yet, while her tears
Were flowing silently, as hours and years
Flow down the tide of time, one whom she loved,
And who from childhood still had faithful proved,
Approached her weeping, and within her hand
A packet placed, as Edmund's—last command!
Wild throbbed her heart, and tears a moment fled,
While, tremblingly, she broke the seal, and read—
Then wept, and sobbed aloud, and read again,
These farewell words, of passion and of pain,

XV.

EDMUND'S LETTER.

Helen!—*farewell!*—I write but could not speak
That parting word of bitterness;—the cheek
Grows pale when the tongue utters it;—the knell
Which tells—'the grave is ready!' and doth swell
On the dull wind, tolling—'the dead—the dead!'
Sounds not more desolate. It is a dread
And fearful thing to be of hope bereft,
As if the soul itself had died, and left
The body living—feeling in its breast
The death of deaths its everlasting guest!
Such is my cheerless bosom—'tis a tomb
Where Hope lies buried in eternal gloom,
And Love mourns o'er it—yes, my Helen—Love—
Like the sad wailings of a widowed dove
Over its rifled nest. Yet blame me not,
That I, a lowly peasant's son, forgot
The gulf between our stations. Could I gaze
Upon the glorious sun, and see its rays
Fling light and beauty round me, and remain
Dead to its power, while on the lighted plain
The humblest weed looked up in love, and spread
Its leaves before it!—The vast sea doth wed
The simple brook; the bold lark soars on high,
Bounds from its humble nest and woos the sky;
Yea, the frail ivy seeks and loves to cling
Round the proud branches of the forest's king;
Then blame me not;—thou wilt not—cannot blame:
Our sorrows, hopes, and joys, have been the same—
Been one from childhood; but the dream is past,
And stern realities at length have cast
Our fates asunder. Yet, when thou shalt see
Proud ones before thee bend the suppliant knee,
And kiss thy garment while they woo thy hand,
Spurn not the peasant boy who dared to stand
Before thee, in the rapture of his heart,
And woo thee as thine equal. Courtly art
May find more fitting phrase to charm thine ear,
But, dearest, mayst thou find them as sincere!
And, oh! by every past and hallowed hour!
By the lone tree that formed our trysting bower!
By the fair moon, and all the stars of night,
That round us threw love's holiest, dearest light!
By infant passion's first and burning kiss!
By every witness of departed bliss!
Forget me not!—loved one!—Forget me not!
For, oh, to know that I am not forgot—
That thou wilt still retain within thy breast
Some thought of him who loved you first and best—
To know but this, would in my bosom be
Like one faint star seen from the pathless sea
By the bewildered mariner. Once more,
Maid of my heart—farewell! A distant shore
Must be thy Edmund's home—though where the soul
Is as a wilderness—from pole to pole
The desolate in heart may ceaseless roam,
Nor find on earth that spot of heaven—a home!
But be thou happy!—be my Helen blessed!—
Thou wilt be happy! Oh! those words have pressed
Thoughts on my brain on which I may not dwell!
Again, farewell!—my Helen, fare-thee-well!"

XVI.

A gallant bark was gliding o'er the seas,
And, like a living mass, before the breeze,
Swept on majestic, as a thing of mind
Whose spirit held communion with the wind,
Rearing and rising o'er the billowed tide,
As a proud steed doth toss its head in pride.
Upon its deck young Edmund silent stood—
A son of sadness; and his mournful mood
Grew day by day, while wave on wave rolled by,
And he their homeward current with a sigh
Followed with fondness. Still the vessel bore
The wanderer onward from his native shore,
Till in a distant land he lonely stood
'Midst city crowds in more than solitude.

XVII.

There long he wandered, without aim or plan,
Till *disappointment* whispered—*act as man!*
But, though it cool the fever of the brain,
And shake, untaught, presumption's idle reign,
Bring folly to its level, and bid hope
Before the threshold of attainment stop;
Still—when its blastings thwart our every scheme,
When humblest wishes seem an idle dream,
And the bare bread of life is half denied—
Such disappointments humble not our pride;
But they do change the temper of the soul—
Change every word and action—and enrol
The nobler mind with things of basest name—
With idleness, dishonesty, and shame!
It hath its bounds, and thus far it is well
To check presumption—visions wild to quell;
Then, 'tis the chastening of a father's hand—
All wholesome—all expedient. But to stand
Writhing beneath the unsparing lash, and be
Trampled on veriest earth, while misery
Stems the young blood, or makes it freeze with care,
And on the tearless eyeballs writes—*Despair!*
Oh! this is terrible!—and it doth throw
Upon the brow such early marks of wo
That men seemed old ere they have well been young—
Their fond hopes perish, and their hearts are wrung
With such dark feelings—misanthropic gloom,
Spite of their natures, haunts them to the tomb.

XVIII.

Now, Edmund 'midst the bustling throng appears
One old in wretchedness, though young in years,
For he had struggled with an angry world,
Had felt misfortune's billows o'er him hurled,
And strove against its tide—where wave meets wave
Like huge leviathans sporting wild, and lave
Their mountain breakers round with circling sweep,
Till, drawn within the vortex of their deep,
The man of ruin struggleth—but in vain;
Like dying swimmers who, in breathless pain
Despairing, strike at random!—It would be
A subject worth the schoolmen's scrutiny

To trace each simple source from whence arose
The strong and mingled stream of human woes;—
But here we may not. It is ours alone
To make the lonely wanderer's fortunes known;
And now, in plain but faithful colours dressed,
To paint the feelings of his hopeless breast.

XIX.

His withered prospects blacken—wounds await—
The grave grows sunlight to his darker fate.
All now is gall and bitterness within,
And thoughts, once sternly pure, half yield to sin.
His sickened soul, in all its native pride,
Swells 'neath the breast that tattered vestments hide,
Disdained—disdaining!—while men flourish, he
Still stands a stately though a withered tree.
But, heavens!—the agony of the moment when
Suspicion stamped the smiles of other men!
When friends glanced *doubts*, and proudly prudent grew,
His counsellors, and his accusers too!

XX.

Picture his pain, his misery, when first
His growing wants their proud concealment burst!—
When the first tears start from his stubborn soul,
Big, burning, solitary drops, that roll
Down his pale cheek—the momentary gush
Of human weakness—till the whirlwind rush
Of pride—of shame—had dashed them from his eye,
And his swollen heart heaved mad with agony!
Then—then the pain!—the infinity of feeling!—
Words fail to paint its anguish. Reason, reeling,
Staggered with torture through his burning brain,
While his teeth gnashed with bitterness and pain—
Reflection grew a scorpion!—speech had fled,
And all but madness and despair were dead!

XXI.

He slept to dream of death—or worse than death;
For death were bliss, and the convulsive wrath
Of living torture peace, to the dread weight
That pressed upon sensation, while the light
Of reason gleamed but horror, and strange hosts
Of hideous phantasies, like threat'ning ghosts,
Grotesquely mingled, preyed upon his brain:
Then would he dream of yesterdays again,
Or view to-morrow's terrors thick surround
His fancy with forebodings. While the sound
Of his own breath broke frightful on his ear,
He, bathed in icy sweat, would start in fear,
Trembling and pale; then did his glances seem
Sad as the sun's last, conscious, farewell gleam
Upon the eve of judgment. Such appear
His days and nights whom hope has ceased to cheer.
But grov'llers know it not. The supple slave
Whose worthiest record is a nameless grave—
Whose truckling spirit bends and bids him kneel,
And fawn and vilely kiss a patron's heel—
Even *he* can cast the cursed suspicious eye—
Inquire the *cause* of *this*—the *reason why?*
And stab the sufferer. Then, the tenfold pain
To feel a gilded butterfly's disdain!—
A kicking ass, without an ass's sense,
Whose only virtue is—pounds—shillings—pence!
And, now, while ills on ills beset him round,
The scorn of such the hopeless Edmund found.

XXII.

But Hope returned, and on the wanderer's ear
Breathed its life-giving watchword—*persevere!*
And torn by want, and struggling with despair,
These were his words—his fixed resolve and prayer—
"Hail, perseverance!—rectitude of heart
Through life thy aid—thy conquering power.
Repulsed and broken—blasted—be thou ever
A portion of my spirit!—Leave me never!
Firm—fixed in purpose—watchful—unsubdued,
Until my hand hath grasped the prize pursued."

Canto Second.

Now, list thee, love, again, and I will tell
Of other scenes, and changes which befel
The hero of our tale. A wanderer still,
Like a lost sheep upon a wintry hill—
Wild through his heart rush want and memory now,
Like whirlwinds meeting on a mountain's brow;
Slow in his veins the thin blood coldly creeps;
He starts, he dreams, and, as he walks—he sleeps!
He is a stranger—houseless, fainting, poor,
Without the shelter of one friendly door;
The cold wind whistles through his garments bare,
And shakes the night-dew from his freezing hair.
You weep to hear his woes, and ask me why,
When sorrows gathered and no aid was nigh,
He sought not then the cottage of his birth,
The peace and comforts of his father's hearth?
That also thou shalt hear. Scarce had he left
His parents' home, ere ruthless fortune reft
His friend and father of his little all.
Crops failed, and friends proved false; but, worse than all,
The wife of his young love, bowed down with grief
For her sole child, like an autumnal leaf
Nipped by the frosts of night, drooped day by day,
As a fair morning cloud dissolves away.
Her eyes were dimmed with tears; and o'er her cheek
Like a faint rainbow, broke a fitful streak,
Coming and vanishing. She weaker grew,
And scarce the half of their misfortunes knew,
Until the law's stern minions, as their prey,
Relentless seized the bed on which she lay.
"My husband!—Oh, my son!" she faintly cried—
Sank on her pillow, and before them died!
Even they shed tears. The widowed husband, there,
Stood like the stricken ghost of dumb despair;
Then sobbed aloud, and, sinking on the bed,
Kissed the cold forehead of his sainted dead.
Then went he forth, a lone and ruined man;
But, ere three moons their circling journeys ran,
Pride, like a burning poison in his breast,
Scorched up his life, and gave the ruined rest;
Yet not till he, with tottering steps and slow,
Regained the vale where Tweed's fair waters flow:
And there, where pines around the churchyard wave,
He breathed his last upon his partner's grave!

II.

I may not tell what ills o'er Edmund passed—
Enough to say, that fortune smiled at last.
In the far land, where the broad Ganges rolls,
Where Nature's bathed in glory—and the souls
Of men alone dwell in a starless night,
While all around them glows and lives in light—
There now we find him, honoured, trusted, loved;
For, from the humblest stations, he had proved
Faithful in all; and trust on trust obtained,
Till, if not wealth, he *independence* gained—
Earth's noblest blessing, and the dearest given
To man, beneath the sacred hope of heaven.
And still, as time on silent pinions flew,
His fortunes flourished and his honours grew;
But, as they grew, an anxious hope that long
Had in his bosom been but as the song
Of viewless echo, indistinct, and still
Receding from us, grew as doth a rill

Embraced by others and increasing ever,
Till distant plains confess the sweeping river.
And, need I say, that hope referred alone
To her who in his heart had fixed her throne,
And reigned within it still, the sovereign queen.
Yet darkest visions oft would flit between
His fondest fancies, as the thought returned
That she for whom his soul still restless burned,
Would be another's now, while haply he,
Lost to her heart, would to her memory be
As the remembrance of a pleasing dream,
Vague and forgotten half, but which we deem
Worthy no waking thought. Thus years rolled by—
Hope wilder glowed and brightened in his eye,
Nor knew he why he hoped; but, though despair
The Enthusiast's heart may madly grasp, and glare
Even on his soul, it may not long remain
A dweller in his breast, for hope doth reign
There as o'er its inheritance; and he
Lives in fond visions of futurity.

III.

Twelve slow and chequered years had passed.—Again
A stately vessel ploughed the pathless main;
And waves, and days, together glided by,
Till, as a cloud on the Enthusiast's eye,
His island-home rose from the ocean's breast—
A thing of strength, of glory, and of rest—
The giant of the deep!—while on his sight
Burst the blue hills, and cliffs of dazzling white—
Stronger than death! and beautiful as strong!
Kissed by the sea, and worshipped with its song!
"Home of my fathers!" the Enthusiast cried;
"Their home—ay and their grave!" he said and sighed.
But gazing still upon its glorious strand,
Again he cried—"My own—my honoured land!
Fair freedom's home and mine! Britannia! hail!
Queen of the mighty seas; to whom each gale
From every point of heaven a tribute brings,
And on thy shores earth's farthest treasure flings!
Land of my heart and birth! at sight of thee
My spirit boundeth, like a bird set free
From long captivity! Thy very air
Is fragrant with remembrance! Thou dost bear,
On thy Herculean cliffs, the rugged seal
Of godlike Liberty! The slave might kneel
Upon thy shore, bending the willing knee,
To kiss the sacred earth that sets him free!
Even I feel freer as I reach thy shore,
And my soul mingles with the ocean's roar
That hymns around thee! Birth-place of the brave!
My own—my glorious home!—the very wave,
Rolling in strength and beauty, leaps on high,
As if rejoicing on thy beach to die!
My loved—my father-land! thy faults to me
Are as the specks which men at noon-tide see
Upon the blinding sun, and dwindle pale
Beneath thy virtue's and thy glory's veil.
Land of my birth! where'er thy sons may roam
Their pride—their boast—their passport—is their home!"

IV.

'Twas early spring; and winter lingered still
On the cold summit of the snow-capt hill;
The day was closing, and slow darkness stole
Over the earth as sleep steals on the soul,
Sealing the eye-lids up—unconscious, slow,
Till sleep and darkness reign, and we but know
On waking, that we slept; but may not tell—
Nor marked we when sleep's darkness on us fell.
A lonely stranger then bent anxious o'er
A rustic gate before the cottage door—
The snow-white cottage where the chestnuts grew,
And o'er its roof their arching branches threw.
It was young Edmund, gazing, through his tears,
On the now cheerless home of early years—
While as the grave of buried joys it stood,
Its white walls shadowed through the leafless wood;
The once arched woodbine waving wild and bare;
The parterre, erst the object of his care,
With early weeds o'ergrown; and slow decay
Had changed or swept all else he loved away.
Upon the sacred threshold, once his own,
He silent stood, unwelcomed and unknown;
Gazed, sighed, and turned away; then sadly strayed
To the cold, dreamless churchyard, where were laid
His parents, side by side. A change had come
O'er all that he had loved;—his home was dumb,
And through the vale no accent met his ear
That he was wont in early days to hear;
While childhood's scenes fell dimly on his view,
As a dull picture of a spot we knew,
Where we but cold and lifeless forms can trace,
But no bold truth nor one familiar face.

V.

Night sat upon the graves, like gloom to gloom
As silent treading o'er each lowly tomb,
Thoughtful and sad, he lonely strove to trace,
Amidst the graves, his father's resting place.
And well the spot he knew; yea, it alone
Was all now left that he might call his own
Of all that was his kindred's; and, although
He looked for no proud monument, to shew
The tomb he sought, yet mem'ry marked the spot
Where slept his ancestors; and had it not,
He deemed—he felt—that, if his feet but trode
Upon his parents' dust, the voice of God,
As it of old flashed through a prophet's breast,
Would in his bosom whisper—"Here they rest!"
'Twas an Enthusiast's thought;—but, oh! to tread,
With darkness round us, midst the voiceless dead,
With not an eye but Heaven's upon our face—
At such a moment, and in such a place,
Seeking the dead we love; who would not feel,
Yea, and believe as he did then; and kneel
On friend or father's grave, and kiss the sod
As in the presence of our father's God!

VII.

He reached the spot;—he startled—trembled—wept;
And through his bosom wildest feelings swept.
He sought a nameless grave, but o'er the place
Where slept the generations of his race,
A marble pillar rose!—"O Heaven!" he cried,
"Has avaricious Ruin's hand denied
The parents of my heart a grave with those
Of their own kindred?—Have their ruthless foes
Grasped this last, sacred spot we called our own?
If but a weed upon that grave had grown
I would have honoured it!—have called it brother!
Even for my father's sake, and thine, my mother!
But that cold marble freezes up my heart
And seems to tell me that I have no part
With its proud dead; while through the veil of night,
The name it bears yet mocks my anxious sight."
Thus cried he bitterly; then, trembling, placed
His fingers on the marble, while he traced
Its letters one by one, and o'er and o'er;—
Grew blind with eagerness, and shook the more,
As with each touch, the feeling o'er him came—
The unseen letters formed his father's name!

VII.

While thus, with beating heart, pursuing still
His anxious task slow o'er a neighbouring hill

The broad moon rose, by not a cloud concealed,
Lit up the valley, and the tomb revealed!—
His parents' tomb!—and now, with wild surprise,
He saw the column burst upon his eyes—
Fair, chaste, and beautiful; and on it read
These lines in mem'ry of his honoured dead—
"Beneath repose the virtuous and the just,
Mingled in death, affection's hallowed dust.
In token of their worth, this simple stone,
Is, as a daughter's tribute, reared by one
Who loved them as such, and their name would save
As virtue's record o'er their lowly grave."
"Helen!" he fondly cried, "thy hand is here!"
And the cold grave received his burning tear;
Then knelt he o'er it—clasped his hands in prayer—
But, while yet lone and fervid kneeling there,
Before his eyes, upon the grave appear
Primroses twain—the firstlings of the year,
And bursting forth between the blossomed two,
Twin opening buds in simple beauty grew.
He gazed—he loved them as a living thing;
And wondrous thoughts and strange imagining
Those simple flowers spoke to his listening soul
In superstition's whispers; whose control
The wisest in their secret moments feel,
And blush at weakness they may not reveal.

VIII.

He left the place of death; and, rapt in thought,
The trysting-tree of love's young years he sought;
And, as its branches opened on his sight,
Bathing their young buds in the pale moonlight,
A whispered voice, melodious, soft, and low,
As if an angel mourned for mortal wo,
Borne on the ev'ning breeze, came o'er his ear;—
He knew the voice—his heart stood still to hear!
And each sense seem'd a list'ner; but his eye
Sought the sad author of the wand'ring sigh;
And 'neath the tree he loved, a form as fair
As summer in its noon-tide, knelt in prayer.
He clasped his hands—his brow—his bosom burned—
He felt the past—the buried past returned!
Still, still he listened, till, like words of flame,
Through her low prayer he heard his whispered name!
"Helen!" he wildly cried—"my own—my blest!"
Then bounded forth.—I cannot tell the rest.
There was a shriek of joy;—heart throbbed on heart,
And hands were locked as though they ne'er might part;
Wild words were spoken—bliss tumultuous rolled,
And all the anguish of the past was told.

IX.

Upon her love long had her father frowned,
Till tales of Edmund's rising fortunes found
Their way across the wilderness of sea,
And reached the valley of his birth. But she,
With truth unaltered, and with heart sincere,
Through the long midnight of each hopeless year
That marked his absence, shunned the proffered hand
Of wealth and rank; and met her sire's command
With tears and bended knees, until his breast
Again a father's tenderness confessed.

X.

'Twas May—bright May—bird, flower, and shrub, and tree,
Rejoiced in light; while, as a waveless sea
Of living music, glowed the clear blue sky
And every fleecy cloud that floated by
Appeared an isle of song!—as all around,
And all above them echoed with the sound
Of joyous birds, in concert loud and sweet,
Chanting their summer hymns. Beneath their feet
The daisy put its crimson liv'ry on;
While from beneath each crag and mossy stone,
Some gentle flower looked forth; and love and life
Through the Creator's glorious works were rife,
As though his Spirit in the sunbeams said—
"Let there be life and love!" and was obeyed.
Then, in the valley danced a joyous throng,
And happy voices sang a bridal song;
Yea, tripping jocund on the sunny green,
The old and young in one glad dance were seen;
Loud o'er the plain their merry music rang,
While cripple grandames smiling, sat and sang
The ballads of their youth; and need I say
'Twas Edmund's and fair Helen's wedding-day?
Then, as he led her forth in joy and pride,
A hundred voices blessed him and his bride.
Yet scarce he heard them; for his every sense,
Lost in delight and ecstasy intense,
Dwelt upon her; and made their blessings seem
As words breathed o'er us in a wand'ring dream

XI.

Now months and years in quick succession flew,
And joys increased, and still affection grew.
For what is youth's first love to wedded joy?
Or what the transports of the ardent boy
To the fond husband's bliss, which, day by day,
Lights up his spirit with affection's ray?
Man knows not what love is, till all his cares
The partner of his bosom soothes and shares—
Until he find her studious to please—
Watching his wishes!—Oh, 'tis acts like these
That locks her love within his heart, and binds
In one their souls, and forms as one their minds.
Love flowed within their bosoms as a tide,
While the calm rapture of their own fireside
Each day grew holier, dearer; and esteem
Blended its radiance with the glowing beam
Of young affection, till it seemed a sun
Melting their wishes and their thoughts as one.

XII.

Eight years passed o'er them in unclouded joy,
And now by Helen's side a lovely boy,
Looked up and called her—mother; and upon
The knee of Edmund climbed a little one—
A blue-eyed prattler—as her mother fair.
They were their parents' joy, their hope, their care;
But, while their cup with happiness ran o'er,
And the long future promised joys in store,
Death dropped its bitterness within the cup,
And its late pleasant waters mingled up
With wailing and with wo. Like early flowers,
Which the slow worm with venomed tooth devours,
The roses left their two fair children's cheeks,
Or came and went like fitful hectic streaks,
As day by day they drooped;—their sunny eyes
Grew lustreless and sad; and yearning cries—
Such as wring life-drops from a parent's heart,
Their lisping tongues now uttered. The keen dart
Of the unerring archer, Death, had sunk
Deep in their bosoms, and their young blood drunk;
Yet, the affection of the children grew
As its dull, wasting poison wandered through
Their tender breasts, and still they ever lay
With their arms round each other. On the day
That ushered in the night in which they died,
The boy his mother kissed, and fondly cried—
"Weep not, dear mother!—mother, do not weep!
You told me and my sister, death was sleep—
That the good Saviour who from heaven came down
And who for our sake wore a thorny crown—

You often told us how he came to save
Children like us, and conquered o'er the grave;
And I have read it in his blessed book,
How in his hand a little child he took,
And said that such in heaven should greatest be;
Then, weep not, mother—do not weep for me;
For, if I be an angel when I die,
I'll watch you, mother—I'll be ever nigh—
Where'er you go I'll hover o'er your head;
Then, though I'm buried, do not think me dead!
But let my sister's grave and mine be one,
And lay us by the pretty marble stone
To which our father dear was wont to go,
And where, in spring, the sweet primroses blow—
Then, weep not, mother!"—But she wept the more;
While the sad father his affliction bore
Like one in whom all consciousness was dead,
Save that he wrung his hands and rocked his head,
And murmured oft this short and troubled prayer—
"O God! look on me—and my children spare!"

XIII.

Their little arms still round each other clung,
When their last sleep death's shadow o'er them flung:
And still they slept and fainter grew their breath—
Faint and more faint, until their sleep was death.
Deep, but unmurmured was the mother's grief,
For in her Faith she sought and found relief;
Yea, while she mourned a daughter and a son,
She looked to Heaven, and cried—"Thy will be done!"
But, oh! the father no such solace found—
Dark, cheerless anguish, wrapt his spirit round;—
He was a stranger to the Christian's hope,
And in bereavement's hour, he sought a prop
On which his pierced and stricken soul might lean;
Yet, as he sought it, doubts would intervene—
Doubts which for years had clouded o'er his soul—
Doubts that with prayers he struggled to control;
For, though a grounded faith he ne'er had known,
He was no prayerless man; but he had grown
To thinking manhood from his dreaming youth,
A *seeker* still—a *seeker after truth!*—
An earnest seeker, but his searching care
Sought more in books and nature than by prayer;
And vain he sought, nor books nor nature gave
The hope of hopes that animates the grave!
Though, to have felt that hope, he would have changed
His station with the mendicant who ranged
Homeless from door to door and begged his bread,
While heaven hurled its tempest round his head.
For what is hunger, pain, or piercing wind,
To the eternal midnight of the mind?
Or what on earth a horror can impart,
Like his who feels engraven on his heart
The word—*Annihilation!* Often now
The sad Enthusiast would strike his brow,
And cry aloud, with deep and bitter groans—
"How have I sinned, that both my little ones—
The children of my heart—should be struck down?
Oh! Thou Almighty Spirit! if thy frown
Is now upon me, turn aside thy wrath,
And guide me—lead, oh, lead me in the path
Of Heaven's own truth;—direct my faith aright,
Teach me to hope, and lend thy Spirit's light."

XIV.

Thus, long his soul as a frail bark was tossed
On a dark sea, with helm and compass lost,
Till she who ever to his breast had been
The star of hope and love, with brow serene
As if no sorrow e'er her heart had riven
But her eye calmly looked through time to heaven—
Soothed his sad spirit, and with anxious care
Used much of reason, and yet more of prayer;
Till bright'ning hope dawned gently o'er his soul,
Like the sun's shadow at the freezing pole,
Seen by the shiv'ring Greenlander or e'er
Its front of fire does his horizon cheer;
While brighter still that ardent hope became,
Till in his bosom glowed the living flame
Of Christian faith—faith in the Saviour sent,
By the Eternal God, to preach—"Repent
And be ye saved."—Then peace, as sunshine, fell
On the Enthusiast's bosom, and the swell
Of anguish died away, as o'er the deep
The waves lie down when winds and tempests sleep.

XV.

Time glided on, and wedded joys still grew
As beauty deepens on an autumn view
With tinges rich as heaven! and, though less green,
More holy far than summer's fairest scene.
Now o'er the happy pair, at life's calm eve
Age like a shadow fell, and seemed to weave
So fair a twilight round each silvered brow,
That they ne'er felt so young, so blest as now;
Though threescore winters o'er their path had fled,
And left the snow of years on either head.
For age drew round them, but they knew it not—
The once bright face of youth was half forgot;
But still the young, the unchanged heart was there
And still his aged Helen seemed as fair
As when, with throbbing heart and giddy bliss,
He from her lips first snatched the virgin kiss!

XVI.

Last scene of all—an old and widowed man,
Whose years had reached life's farthest, frailest span,
And o'er whose head as every moment flew
Eternity its dark'ning twilight threw,
Lay in his silent chamber, dull and lone,
Watching the midnight stars, as one by one
They as slow, voiceless spirits glided past
The window of his solitude, and cast
Their pale light on his brow; and thus he lay
Till the bright star that ushers in the day
Rose on his sight, and, with it cheering beams,
Lit in his bosom youth's delicious dreams;
Yea, while he gazed upon that golden star,
Rolling in light, like love's celestial car,
He deemed he in its radiance read the while
His children's voices and his Helen's smile;
And as it passed and from his sight withdrew,
His longing spirit followed it! and flew
To heaven and deathless bliss—from earth and care,
To meet his Helen and her children there!

To the Reader.—The Metrical Tale of *Edmund and Helen* was originally published by the Author about two years ago, in a five shilling volume, under the title of *The Enthusiast.* It has seldom been the lot of a similar production to be more favourably received by the Press than it was, both in this country and in America. However, whatever may be its merits, never before was what is termed an *original poem* of the same length published at *three halfpence;* and whereas copies of it hitherto have been confined to the possession of comparatively few—in its present form it is placed in the hands of many thousands.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

ROGER GOLDIE'S NARRATIVE.

A TALE OF THE FALSE ALARM.

Ye have heard of the false alarm, (said Roger Goldie,) which, for the space of wellnigh four and twenty hours, filled the counties upon the Border with exceeding great consternation, and at the same time called forth an example of general and devoted heroism, and love of country, such as is nowhere recorded in the annals of any nation upon the face of the globe. Good cause have I to remember it; and were I to live a thousand years, it never would be effaced from my recollection. What first gave rise to the alarm, I have not been able clearly to ascertain unto this day. There was a house-heating up beside Preston, with feasting and dancing; and a great light, like that of a flambeau, proceeded from the onstead. Now, some say that the man that kept the beacon on Hownamlaw, mistook the light for the signal on Dunselaw; and the man at Dunselaw in his turn, seeing Hownam flare up, lighted his fires also, and speedily the red burning alphabet of war blazed on every hill top—a spirit seemed to fly from mountain to mountain, touching their summits with fire, and writing in the flame the word—*invasion!* Others say that it arose from the individual who kept watch at Hume Castle being deceived by an accidental fire over in Northumberland; and a very general supposition is, that it arose from a feint on the part of a great sea-admiral, which he made in order to try the courage and loyalty of the nation. To the last report, however, I attach no credit. The fable informs us, that the shepherd laddie lost his sheep, because he cried, "The wolf!" when there was no wolf at hand; and it would have been policy similar to his, to have cried, "*An invasion!*" when there was no invasion. Neither nations nor individuals like such practical jokes. It is also certain that the alarm was not first given by the beacons on the sea-coast; and there can be no doubt that the mistake originated either at Hownamlaw or Hume Castle.

I recollect it was in the beginning of February 1804. I occupied a house then about half a mile out of Dunse, and lived comfortably, and I will say contentedly, on the interest of sixteen hundred pounds which I had invested in the funds; and it required but little discrimination to foresee, that, if the French fairly got a footing in our country, funded property would not be worth an old song. I could at all times have risked my life in defence of my native land, for the love I bore it; though you will perceive that I had a double motive to do so; and the more particularly, as, out of the interest of my funded capital, I maintained in competence an affectionate wife and a dutiful son—our only child. The name of my wife was Agnes, and the name of my son—who, at the time of the alarm, was sixteen—was Robert. Upon their account it often caused me great uneasiness, when I read and heard of the victories and the threatenings of the terrible Corsican. I sometimes dreamed that he had marched a mighty army on a bridge of boats across the straits of Dover, and that he had not only seized my sixteen hundred pounds, but drawn my son, my only son, Robie, as a conscript, to fight against his own natural and lawful country, and, perhaps, to shoot his father! I therefore, as in duty bound, as a true and loyal subject, had enrolled myself in the Dunse volunteers. Some joined the volunteers to escape being drawn for the militia, but I could give my solemn affidavit, that I had no motive but the defence of my country—and my property, which, as I had said, was a double inducement.

I did not make a distinguished figure in the corps, for my stature did not exceed five feet two inches. But although my body was small, no man was more punctual on the parade; and I will affirm, without vanity, none more active, or had a bolder heart. It always appeared to me to be the height of folly to refuse to admit a man into a regiment because nature had not formed him a giant. The little man is not so apt to shoot over the head of an enemy, and he runs less risk of being shot himself—two things very necessary to be considered in a battle; and were I a general, I would have a regiment where five feet two should be the maximum height even for the grenadier company.

But, as I was saying, it was early in the February of 1804, on the second night, if I recollect aright—I had been an hour abed, and was lying about three parts asleep, when I was started with a sort of bum, bumming, like the beating of a drum. I thought also that I heard people running along the road, past the door. I listened, and, to my horror I distinctly heard the alarm drum beating to arms. It was a dreadful sound to arouse a man from his sleep in our peaceful land.

"Robie!" cried I to my son, "rise, my man, rise, and run down to the town, and see what is the matter. that they are beating the alarm drum at this time of night. I fear that"——

"Oh, dearsake, Roger!" cried Agnes, grasping my arm, "what do ye fear?"

"That—that there's a fire in the town," said I.

"Weel," quoth she, "it canna reach us. But, oh, dear me! ye have made my heart beat as if it would start from my breast—for I thought ye was gaun to say that ye was feared the French were landed!"

"I hope not," said I. But, in truth, it was that which I did fear.

Robie was a bold, spirited laddie; and he rushed out of the house, cold as it was, half-dressed, and without his jacket; but he had not been absent a minute, when he hurried back again, and cried breathlessly as he entered—"Faither! faither! the Law is a' in a lowe!—the French are landed!"

I was then standing in the middle of the floor, putting on my clothes; and, starting as though I had seen an apparition, I exclaimed—"The French landed!—rise, Agnes! rise, and get me my accoutrements. For this day I will arm and do battle in defence of my native land."

"Roger! Roger!" cried my wife, "wherefore will ye act foolishly. Stop at home, as a man ought to do, to preserve and protect his ain family and his ain property. Wherefore would ye risk life or limb withouten cause. There will be enough to fight the French without you—unmarried men, or men that have naebody to leave behint them and to mourn for them."

"Agnes," said I, in a tone which manifested my authority, and at the same time shewed the courageousness of my spirit—"get me my accoutrements. I have always been the first upon the parade, and I will not be the last to shew my face upon the field of battle. I am but a little man—the least battalion man in the whole corps—but I have a heart as big as the biggest of them. Bonaparte himself is no Goliath, and a shot from my musket might reach his breast.

when a taller man would be touching the cockade on his cocked hat. Therefore, quick! quick!—get me my accoutrements."

"Oh, guidman!" cried she, "your poor, heart-broken wife will fall on her knees before ye—and I implore ye, for my sake, and for the sake o' our dear bairn, that ye winna fling away yer life, and rush upon destruction. What, in the name of fortune, has a peaceable man like you to do wi' war or wi' Bonaparte either? Dinna think of leaving the house this night, and I myself will go down to the town and procure a substitute in your stead. I have fifteen pounds in the kist, that I have been scraping thegither for these twelve years past, and I will gie them to ony man that will take your place in the volunteers, and go forth to fight the French in your steed."

"Guidwife," said I, angrily, "ye forget what ye are talking about. The French are landed, and every man, auld and young, must take up arms. Ye would have me to become the laughing-stock of both town and country. Therefore get me my accoutrements, and let me down to the cross."

"O Robie, my bairn!—my only bairn!" cried she, weeping, and addressing our son, "try ye to prevail upon your faither to gie up his mad resolution. If he leave us, he will mak you faitherless and me a widow."

"Mother," said the laddie, gallantly, "the French are landed, and my faither maun help to drive them into the sea. I will tak my pistol and gang wi' him, and if ony thing happens, I will be at hand to assist him."

"Haud, haud your tongue, ye silly callant!" she exclaimed, in great tribulation, "ye are as great a fool as your faither is. He sees what he has made o' you. But as the auld cock craws the young ane learns."

I felt a sort of glow of satisfaction warming my heart at the manifestation of my son's spirit; but I knew that in one of his age, and especially at such a time, and with such a prospect before us, it was not right to encourage it, and it was impossible for a fond parent to incite his only son to the performance of an act that would endanger his life. I therefore spoke to him kindly, but, at the same time, with the firmness necessary to enforce the commands of a father, and said—"Ye are too young, Robin, to become a participator in scenes of war and horror. Your young bosom, that is yet a stranger to sorrow, must not be exposed to the destroying bullet; nor your bonny cheek, where the rose-bud blooms, disfigured with the sabre or the horse's hoof. Ye must not break your mother's heart, but stay at home to comfort and defend her, when your father is absent, fighting for ye both."

The boy listened to me in silence, but I thought that sullenness mingled with his obedience, and I had never seen him sullen before. Agnes went around the house weeping, and finding that I was not to be gainsayed, she brought me my military apparel and my weapons of war. When, therefore, I was arrayed and ready for the field, and while the roll of the drum was still summoning us to muster, I took her hand to bid her farewell—but, in the fulness of my heart, I pressed my lips to hers, and my tears mingled with her own upon her cheek.

"Farewell, Agnes," said I, "but I trust—I hope—I doubt not, but we shall soon return safe, sound, and victorious. But if I should not—if it be so ordered that it is to be my lot to fall gloriously in defence of our country, our son Robert will comfort ye and protect ye; and ye will find all the papers relating to the sixteen hundred pounds of funded property in my private drawer; although, if the French gain a footing in the country, I doubt it will be but of small benefit to ye. And, in that case, Robin, my man," added I, addressing my son, "ye will have to labour with your hands to protect your mother! Bless you, doubly bless you both."

I saw my son fall upon his mother's neck, and it afforded me a consolation. With great difficulty I got out of the house, and I heard Agnes sobbing when I was a hundred yards distant. I still also heard the roll of the drum rolling and rattling through the stillness of midnight, and, on arriving at the cross, I found a number of the volunteers and a multitude of the townspeople assembled. No one could tell *where* the French had landed, but all knew that they *had* landed.

That, I assure ye, was a never-to-be-forgotten night. Every person naturally looked anxious, but I believe I may safely say, that there was not one face in a hundred that was pale with fear, or that exhibited a trace of cowardice or terror upon it. One thought was uppermost in every bosom, and that was—to drive back the invaders, yea, to drive them into, and drown them in the German ocean, even as Pharaoh and his host were encompassed by the Red Sea and drowned in it. Generally speaking, a spirit of genuine, of universal heroism was manifested. The alacrity with which the volunteers assembled under arms, was astonishing; not but that there were a few who fell into the ranks rather slowly and with apparent reluctance; but some of those, like me, had perhaps wives to cling round their necks, and to beseech them not to venture forth into the war. One of the last who appeared upon the ground, was my right-hand comrade, Jonathan Barlowman. I had to step to the left to make room for Jonathan, and, as he took his place by my side, I heard the teeth chattering in his head. Our commanding officer spoke to him rather sharply, about being so slow in turning out in an hour of such imminent peril. But I believe Jonathan was insensible to the reprimand.

The drums began to beat and the fifes to play—the word "March!" was given—the townspeople gave us three cheers as we began to move—and my comrade Jonathan, in his agitation, put his wrong foot foremost, and could not keep the step. So we marched onward, armed and full of patriotism, towards Haddington, which, in case of the invasion, was appointed our head-quarters or place of rendezvous.

I will not pretend to say that I felt altogether comfortable during the march; indeed, to have done so was impossible, for the night was bitterly cold, and at all times there is but little shelter on the bleak and wild Lammermoors; yet the cold gave me but small concern, in comparison of the thoughts of my Agnes and my son Robin. I felt that I loved them even better than ever I had imagined I loved them before, and it caused me much silent agony of spirit when I thought that I had parted with them—perhaps for ever. Yet, even in the midst of such thoughts, I was cheered by the glorious idea of fighting in defence of one's own native country; and I thought of Wallace and of Bruce, and of all the heroes I had read about when a laddie, and my blood fired again. I found that I hated our invaders with a perfect hatred—that I feared not to meet death—and I grasped my firelock more firmly, and a thousand times fancied that I had it levelled at the breast of the Corsican.

I indulged in this train of thoughts until we had reached Longformacus, and during that period not a word had my right-hand neighbour, Jonathan Barlowman, spoken, either good, bad, or indifferent; but I had frequently heard him groan audibly, as though his spirit were troubled. At length, when we had passed Longformacus, and were in the most desolate part of the hills—"O Mr Goldie! Mr Goldie!" said he, "is this no dismal?"

"I always consider it," answered I, "one of the dreariest spots on the Lammermoors."

"O sir!" said he, "it isna the dreariness o' the road that I am referring to. I would rather be sent across the hills from Cowdingham to Lauder, blindfold, than I would be sent upon an errand like this. But is it not a dismal and a dreadfu' thought that Christian men should be roused out of their beds at the dead of night, to march owre moor and mountain, to be shot, or to cut each other's throats? It is terrible, Mr Goldie!"

Now, he was a man seven inches taller than I was, and I was glad of the opportunity of proving to him that, though I had the lesser body, I had the taller spirit of the two—and the spirit makes the man. Therefore I said to him—"Why, Mr Barlowman, you surprise me to hear you talk; when our country demands our arms in its defence, we should be ready to lay down our lives, if necessary, by night or by day, on mountain or in glen, on moor or in meadow—and I cannot respond your sentiments."

"Weel," said he, "that may be your opinion, and it may be a good opinion, but, for my own part, I do confess that I have no ambition for the honours of either heroism or martyrdom. Had a person been allowed a day to make a sort of decent arrangement of their worldly affairs, it wadna have been sae bad; but to be summoned out of your warm bed at midnight, and to take up an instrument of death in the dark, and go forth to be shot at!—there is, in my opinion, but a small share of either honour or glory in the transaction. This, certainly, is permanent duty now, and peremptory duty also, with a witness! But it is a duty the moral obligation of which I cannot perceive; and I think that a man's first duty is to look after himself—and family."

He mentioned the word "family" with a peculiarity of emphasis, which plainly indicated that he wished it to work an effect upon me, and to bring me over to his way of thinking. But, instead of its producing that effect, my spirit waxed bolder and bolder as I remained an ear-witness of his cowardice.

"Comrade Jonathan—I beg your pardon, Mr Barlowman I meant to say," said I—"the first duty of every man, when his country is in danger, is to take up arms in its defence, and to be ready to lay down his life, if his body will form a barrier to the approach of an enemy."

"It may be sae," said he; "but I would just as soon think of my body being eaten by cannibals, as applied to any such purpose. It will take a long time to convince me that there is any bravery in a man volunteering to 'be shot at for sixpence a-day;' and it will be as long before fighting the French p epare my land for the spring seed. If I can get a substitute when we reach Haddington, they may fight that likes for me."

As we marched along, his body became the victim of one calamity after another. Now his shoes pinched his feet and crippled him, and in a while he was seized with cramp pains in his breast, which bent him together twofold. But, as it was generally suspected by the corps that Jonathan was, at best, hen-hearted, he met with little, indeed I may say no sympathy on account of his complaints, but rather with contempt; for there was not a man in our whole regiment, save himself, that did not hate cowardice with his whole heart, and despise it with his whole soul. Whether he actually was suffering from bodily pain, in addition to the pain of his spirit, or not, it is not for me to judge. The doctor came to the rear to see him, and he said that Mr Barlowman certainly was in a state of high fever, that would render him incapable of being of much service. But I thought that he made the declaration in an ironical sort of tone; and whether it was a fever of fear, of spiritual torment, or of bodily torment, he did not tell. One thing is certain, the one frequently begets the other.

The words of the doctor gave a sort of license to bold Jonathan Barlowman, and his moaning and his groaning, his writhing and complaining, increased. He began to fall behind, and now stood fumbling with his pinching shoes, or bent himself double with his hands across his breast, sighing piteously, and shedding tears in abundance. At length we lost sight and hearing of him, and we imagined that he had turned back, or, peradventure, lain down by the way; but there was no time for us to return to seek him, nor yet to look after one man, when, belike, a hundred thousand French had landed.

Well, it was about an hour after the final disappearance of Jonathan, that a stranger joined our ranks in his stead. He took his place close by my side. He carried a firelock over his shoulder, and was dressed in a greatcoat; but so far as I could judge from his appearance in the dark, I suspected him to be a very young man. I could not get a word out of him, save that in answer to a question—"Are ye Mr Barlowman's substitute?"

And he answered—"Yes."

Beyond that one word, I could not get him to open his mouth. However, I afterwards ascertained that the youth overtook Jonathan, while he was writhing in agony upon the road, and declaring aloud that he would give any money, from ten to a hundred guineas, for a substitute, besides his arms and accoutrements. The young man leaped at the proposal, or rather at a part of it, for he said he would take no money, but that the other should give him his arms, ammunition, and such like, and he would be his substitute. Jonathan joyfully accepted the conditions; but whether or not his pains and his groanings left him, when relieved from the weight of his knapsack, I cannot tell. Our corps voted him to be no man who could find time to be ill, even in earnest, during an invasion.

My attention, however, was now wholly taken up with the stranger, who, it appeared, had been dropped, as if from the clouds, in the very middle of a waste, howling wilderness, to volunteer to serve in the place of my craven comrade, Jonathan Barlowman. The youth excited my curiosity the more, because, as I have already informed ye, he was as silent as a milestone, and not half so satisfactory; for beyond the little word "Yes," which I once got out of him, not another syllable would he breathe—but he kept his head half turned away from me. I felt the consciousness and the assurance growing in me more and more that he was a French spy; therefore I kept my musket so that I could level it at him, and discharge it at half a moment's warning; and I was rejoicing to think that it would be a glorious thing if I got an opportunity of signalizing myself on the very first day of the invasion. I really began to dream of titles and rewards, the thanks of parliament, and the command of a regiment. It is a miracle that, in the delirium of my waking dream, I did not place the muzzle of my musket to my strange comrade's head.

But daylight began to break just as we were about Danskin, and my curiosity to see the stranger's face—to make out who he was or what he was, or whether he was a Frenchman, or one of our own countrymen—was becoming altogether insupportable. But, just with the first peep of day, I got a glimpse of his countenance. I started back for full five yards—the musket dropped out of my hands!

"Robie! Robie, ye rascal!" I exclaimed, in a voice that was heard from the one end of the line to the other, and that made the whole regiment halt—"what in the wide world has brought you here? What do ye mean to be after?"

"To fight the French, faither!" said my brave laddie; "and ye ken ye always said, that, in the event of an invasion, it wad be the duty of every one capable of firing a musket, or lifting a knife, to take up arms. I can do baith; and what mair me than another?"

This was torturing me on the shrine of my own loyalty, and turning my own weapons upon myself in a way that I never had expected.

"Robie! ye daft, disobedient, heart-breaker ye!" continued I, "did I not command ye to remain at home with your mother, to comfort her, and, if it were necessary, and in your power, to defend her; and how, sirrah, have ye dared to desert her, and leave her sorrowing for you?"

"I thought, faither," answered he, "that the best way to defend her, would be to prevent the enemy approaching near to our dwellings."

My comrades round about that heard this answer, could not refrain from giving three cheers in admiration of the bravery of the laddie's spirit; and the cheering attracting the attention of the officers, one of them came forward to us, to inquire into its cause; and, on its being explained to him, he took Robin by the hand, and congratulated me upon having such a son. I confess that I did feel an emotion of pride and gratification glowing in my breast at the time; nevertheless, the fears and the anxiety of a parent predominated, and I thought what a dreadful thing it would be for me, his father, to see him shot or pierced through the body with a bayonet, at my very side; and what account, thought I, could I give of such a transaction to his bereaved and sorrowing mother? For I felt a something within my breast, which whispered, that, if evil befell him in the warfare in which we were about to engage, I would not be able to look her in the face again. I fancied that I heard her upbraiding me with having instilled into his mind a love of war, and I fancied that I heard her voice requiring his life at my hands, and crying—"Where is my son?"

At length we arrived at Haddington; and there, in the course of the day, it was discovered, to the gratification of some and the disappointment of many, that our march had originated in a *false alarm*. I do confess that I was amongst those who felt gratified that the peace of the land was not to be endangered, but that we were to return every man to his own fireside, and to sit down beneath our vine and our fig tree, with the olive branches twining between them. But amongst those who were disappointed, and who shewed their chagrin by the gnashing of their teeth, was my silly laddie, my only son Robert. When he saw the people laughing in the marketplace, and heard that the whole Borders had been aroused by an accidental light upon a hill, his young brow lowered as black as midnight—his whole body trembled with a sort of smothered rage—and his eyebrows drew together until the shape of a horse-shoe was engraven between them.

"Robie, my captain," said I, "wherefore are ye looking sae dour? Man, ye ought to rejoice that no invader as yet has dared to set his foot upon our coast, and that you and I will return to your mother, who, no doubt, will be distracted upon your account beyond measure. But, oh, when she sees you again, I think that I see her now springing up from the chair, where she is sitting rocking and mourning, and flinging her arms round your neck, crying—'Robie!—Robie, my son! where have ye been?—how could ye leave your mother?' Then she will sob upon your breast, and wet your cheek with her tears; and I will lift her arms from your neck, and say—'Look ye, Agnes, woman, your husband is restored to ye safe and sound, as well as your son!' And then I will tell her all about your bravery, and your following us over the moors, and the cowardice of Jonathan Barlowman, and of your coming up to him, where he groaned behind us on the road—of your becoming his substitute, and of your getting his greatcoat, his knapsack, and his gun—and of your marching an hour by your father's side without him finding out who you were. I will tell her all about my discovering you, and about your answers, and the cheering of the volunteers; and the officers coming up and taking your hand, and congratulating me upon having such a son. O Robie, man! I will tell her everything! It will be such a meeting as there has not been in the memory of man. Therefore, as the French are neither landed nor like to land, I will speak to the superior officer, and you and I will set off for Dunse immediately."

We went into a public-house, to have a bottle of ale and baps; and I think I never in my life partook of anything more refreshing or more delicious. Even Robie, notwithstanding the horse-shoe of angry disappointment on his brow, made a hearty repast; but that was natural to a growing laddie, and especially after such a tramp as we had had in the death and darkness of night, over moor and heather.

"Eat well, Robie, lad," said I; "it's a long road over again between here and Dunse, and there is but little to be got on it. Take another glass of ale; ye never tasted anything from Clockmill to match that. It is as delicious as honey, and as refreshing as fountain water."

That really was the case; though whether the peculiar excellence of the ale arose from anything extraordinarily grateful in its flavour, or from my long march, my thirst and sharp appetite—added to the joy I felt in the unexpected prospect of returning home in peace and happiness with my son, instead of slaughtering at enemies, or being slaughtered by them—I cannot affirm. There might be something in both. Robin, however, drank an entire bottle to his own head—that was three parts of a choppin, and a great deal too much for a laddie of his years. But in the temper he was in, and knowing by myself that he must be both thirsty and hungry, I did not think it prudent to restrain him. It was apparent that the liquor was getting uppermost in his brain, and he began to speak and to argue in company, and to strike his hand upon the table like an angry man; in short, he seemed forgetful of my presence, and those were exhibitions which I had never observed in him before.

I was exceedingly anxious to get home, upon his mother's account; for she was a woman of a tender heart and a nervous temperament; and I knew that she would be in a state bordering on distraction on account of his absence. I therefore said to him—"Robin, I am going to speak to the commanding officer; ye will sit here until I come back, but do not drink any more."

"Very weel, faither," said he.

So I went out and spoke to the officer, and told him my reasons for wishing to return home immediately; urging the state of anxiety and distress that Agnes would be in on account of the absence of our son.

"Very well, Mr Goldie," said he; "it is all very right and proper; I have a regard to the feelings of a husband and a parent; and as this has proved but a false alarm, there is no obstacle to your returning home immediately."

I thanked him very gratefully for his civility, and stepped away up to the George Inn, where I took two outside places on the heavy coach to Dunbar, intending to walk from there to Broxmouth, and to strike up there by the west to Innerwick, and away over the hills, down by Preston, and home.

I am certain I was not twenty minutes or half an hour absent at the farthest. When I entered the public-house again, I looked for my son, but he was not there.

"What have ye made of Robie?" said I to my comrades.

"Has he no been wi' ye?" answered they; "he left the house just after ye."

Mortal man cannot describe the fear, agony, and consternation that fell upon me. The sweat burst upon my brow as though it had been the warmest day in summer. A thousand apprehensions laid their hands upon me in a moment.

"With me!" said I; "he's not been with me: have none of you an idea where he can have gone?"

"Not the smallest," said they; "but he canna be far off—he will soon cast up. He will only be out looking at the town."

"Or shewing off gallant Jonathan Barlowman's gun, bigcoat, and knapsack," said one.

"Keep yoursel at ease, Mr Goldie," said another, laughing; "there is no danger of his passing the advanced posts, and falling into the hands of the French."

It was easy for those to jest who were ignorant of a father's fears and a father's feelings. I sat down for the space of five minutes, and to me they seemed five hours; but I drank nothing, and I said nothing, but I kept my eyes fixed

upon the door. Robin did not return. I thought the ale might have overcome the laddie, and that he had gone out and lain down in a state of sickness; and "That," thought I, "will be a *becoming* state for me to take him home in to his distressed mother. Or it will cause us to stop a night upon the road."

My anxiety became insupportable, and I again left my comrades, and went out to seek him. I sought him in every street, in every public-house in the town, amongst the soldiers, and amongst the townspeople; but all were too much occupied in discussing the cause of the alarm, to notice him who was to me as the apple of my eye. For three hours I wandered in search of him, east, west, north, and south, making inquiries at every one I met; but no one had seen or heard tell of him. I saw the coach drive off for Dunbar. I beheld also my comrades muster on the following morning, and prepare to return home, but I wandered up and down disconsolate, seeking my son, but finding him not.

The most probable, and the fondest conjecture that I could indulge in, was, that he had returned home. I, therefore, shouldered my musket, and followed my companions to Dunse, whom I overtook upon the moors. It would be impossible for me to describe my feelings by the way—they were torture strained to its utmost extremity, and far more gloomy and dreary than the gloomiest and dreariest parts of the moors over which we had to pass. Every footstep increased my anxiety, every mile the perturbation and agony of my spirit. Never, I believe, did a poor parent endure such misery before, and I wished that I had never been one. I kept looking for him to the right and to the left every minute; and though it was but few travellers that we met upon the road, every one that we did meet I described him to them, and asked them if they had seen him. But, "No!" "No!" was their unvaried answer, and my wretchedness increased.

At length we arrived at Dunse, and a great crowd was there to meet us—wives to welcome their husbands, parents to greet their children, and children their parents. The first that my eyes singled out, was a sister of my Agnes. She ran up to me.

"Roger," she cried, "hae ye seen onything o' Robie?"

The words went through my breast as if it had received the fire of a whole French battalion. I stood stock-still, petrified with despair. My looks told my answer to her question.

"Oh, dear me! dear me!" I heard her cry; "what will his puir mother do noo—for she already is like ane clean out o' her judgment about him."

I did not stop for the word "halt," or for the breaking of the lines; and I went home, I may say by instinct, for neither bird, bush, house nor tree, man nor bairn, was I capable of discerning by the road. Grief and heart-bursting anxiety were as scales upon my eyes. I remember of rushing into the house, throwing down my gun, and crying—"O Agnes! Agnes!" And as well do I remember her impatient and piteous inquiry—"Where is my Robie?—Oh, where is my son?—hae ye no seen him?"

It was long before I could compose myself, so as to tell her all that I knew concerning him; and it was even longer before she was sufficiently calm to comprehend me. Never did unhappy parents before experience greater bitterness of soul. I strove to comfort her, but she would not listen to my words; for, oh, they were as the blind leading the blind; we both were struggling in the slough of despair—both were in the pit of dark, bewildering misery. We sometimes sat looking at each other, like criminals whose last hour is come; and even when our grief wore itself into a "calm sough," there was something in our silence as dismal and more hopeless than the silence of the grave itself. But, every now and then, she would burst out into long, loud lamentations, mourning and crying for "her son!—her son!" Often, too, did we sit, suppressing our very breath, listening to every foot that approached, and as one disappointment followed another, her despair became deeper and deeper, louder and louder, and its crushing weight sank heavier and heavier upon my spirit.

Some of his young companions informed us, that Robin had long expressed a determination to be a soldier; and, on the following day, I set out for Edinburgh to seek for him there, and to buy him off at any price, if he had enlisted.

There, however, I could gather no tidings concerning him; and all that I could learn was, that a regiment had left the Castle that morning at two o'clock, and embarked at Leith for Chatham, from whence they were to proceed direct abroad; and that several recruits were attached to it, some of them only sworn in an hour before they embarked; but whether my poor Robie was among them or not, no one could tell.

I left Edinburgh no wiser, no happier, and in no way more comforted than I entered it, and returned to his mother a sad and sorrowing-hearted man. She wrung her hands the instant she beheld me, and, in a tone that might have touched the heart of a stone, cried aloud—"Oh, my lost! lost bairn! Ye hae made a living grave o' yer mother's breast."

I would have set off immediately for London, and from thence down to Chatham, to inquire for him there; but the wind was favourable when the vessel sailed, and it was therefore certain, that, by the time I got back to Dunse, she was at the place of her destination; and, moreover, I had no certainty or assurance that he was on board. Therefore we spent another day in fruitless lamentations and tears, and in vain inquiries around our own neighbourhood, and amongst his acquaintances.

But my own heart yearned continually, and his mother's moaning was unceasing in my ear, as the ticking of a spider, or the beating of a stop-watch to a person that is doomed to die. I could find no rest. I blamed myself for not proceeding direct from Edinburgh to Chatham; and, next day, I went down to Berwick, to take my place in the mail to London.

By the way I met several of the yeomanry, who were only returning from Dunbar, where they had been summoned by the alarm; and I found that Berwick also had been in arms. But taking my place on the mail, I proceeded, without sleep or rest, to London, and from thence hastened to Chatham. There again I found that the regiment which I sought was already half way down the Channel; but I ascertained also that my poor thoughtless boy was one of the recruits, and even that was some consolation, although but a poor one.

Again I returned to his mother, and told her of the tidings. They brought her no comfort, and, night and day, she brooded on the thought of her fair son lying dead and mangled on the field of slaughter, or of his returning helpless and wounded to his native land. And often it was wormwood to my spirit, and an augmentation of my own sorrows, to find that, in secret, she murmured against me as the author of her bereavement, and as having instilled into my son a liking for a soldier's life. She said it was all owing to my getting him, from the time that he was able to read, to take the newspaper in his hand and read it aloud to my cronies, and in which there were accounts of nothing but wars and battles, of generals and captains, and Bonaparte, of whom enough was foretold and enough could be read in the Revelations. These murmurings grieved me the more, inasmuch as my mind was in no way satisfied that they were without foundation. No man knew better than I did, how easily the twig is bent; a passing breeze, the lighting of a bird upon it, may do it; and as it is bent, so the branch or the tree will be inclined. I, therefore, almost resolved not to permit another newspaper to be brought within my door.

But, somehow or other, it became more necessary than ever. Every time it came it was like a letter from Robie; and we read it from beginning to end, expecting always to hear something of him or of his regiment. Even Agnes grew fond of it, and was uneasy on the Saturdays if the postman was half-an-hour behind the time in bringing it.

Full twelve months passed before we received a letter from him; and never will I forget the delightful sensations that gushed into my bosom at the sight of that letter. I trembled from head to foot with joy. I knew his handwriting at the first glance, and so did his mother—just as well as if he had begun "*dear parents*" on the back of it. It was only to be a penny, and his mother could hardly get her hand into her pocket to give the copper to the postman, she shook so excessively with joy and with agitation, and kept saying to me—"Read Roger! read! Oh, let me hear what my bairn says."

I could hardly keep my hand steady to open it; and, when I did break the seal, I burst into tears at the same moment, and my eyes became as though I were blind; and still his mother continued saying to me—"Oh, read! read!"

Twice, thrice, did I draw my sleeve across my eyes, and at last I read as follows:—

"My Dear Parents,—I fear that my conduct has caused you many a miserable day, and many a sleepless night. But, even for my offence, cruel as it has been, I trust there is forgiveness in a parent's breast. I do not think that I ever spoke of it to you, but, from the very earliest period that I could think, the wish was formed in my mind to be a soldier. When I used to be spelling over the History of Sir William Wallace, or the Lives of the Seven Champions of Christendom, I used to fancy myself Wallace or Saint George; and I resolved, that when I lived to be a man, that I would be a soldier and a hero like them; and I used to think what a grand thing it would be for you and my mother, and all my acquaintances, to be reading about me and my exploits! The continual talking about the war and the French, and of their intention to invade Britain, all strengthened my early desires. Often when I was reading the newspapers to you and your friends, and about the gallant deeds of any particular individual, though I used to read *his name* aloud to you, I always read it in to myself as though it were my own. I had resolved to enlist before the false alarm took place; and, when you and the other volunteers marched out of Dunse to Haddington, I could not resist the temptation which it offered of seeing and being present at a battle. About half-an-hour after you left the town, I followed ye, and, as ye are already aware, overtook poor Jonathan Barlowman, who had fallen behind the corps, in great distress, apparently both of body and mind. He seemed to be in a swither whether to return home, to follow ye, or to lie down and die by the road. I knew him by the sound of the lamentation he was making, and, accosting him, I inquired— What is the matter wi' ye, Jonathan? Has ony o' the French, concealed about the moors, shot ye already?' 'Oh,' he replied, 'I am ill—I am dying!—I am dying!—I will give any money for a substitute!' 'Gie me yer gun,' said I, 'and I will be yer substitute without money.' 'A thousand blessings upon yer head, Robie, lad!' said he; 'ye shall hae my gun, and ye may tak also my greatcoat and knapsack, for they only encumber me. Ye hae rescued a dying man.' I was nearly as tall as he; and, though his coat was loose about me, when I got it on, and his musket over my shoulder, and felt that I was marching like an armed knight of old against the invaders of my country, I felt as proud as an emperor; I would not have changed situations with a king. I overtook you, and you know the rest. At Haddington, the strong ale was too strong for me. I was also sorely mortified to find all my prospects of becoming a hero blasted. When, therefore, you went out to take our places in the coach to Dunbar, I slipped out of the room, and finding Mr Barlowman's coat and gun in a closet in the house, I took the road for Edinburgh; which city I reached within less than three hours; and before I had been in it twenty minutes I was a soldier. I was afraid to write home, lest ye would take steps to buy me off. On the fourth day after my enlisting I was landed at Chatham, where I was subjected to a perpetual drill; and within thirty hours after landing, I again embarked with my regiment; and when I wished to have written, I had not an opportunity. Since then, I have been in two general engagements and several skirmishes, in all of which I have escaped unwounded. I have found that to read of a battle, and to be engaged in a battle, are two very different things. The description is grand, but the sight dismal. I trust that my behaviour as a soldier has been unimpeachable. It has obtained for me the notice of our colonel, who has promoted me to the rank of corporal, with the promise of shortly making me a sergeant; and I am not without hopes, before the war is over, (of which there at present is no prospect,) of obtaining a commission; though it certainly is not one in a thousand that has such fortune. Hoping, therefore, my dear parents, that, under the blessing of Providence, this will find you well, as it leaves me, and that I will live to return to ask your forgiveness, I remain your affectionate and dutiful son,

"Robert Goldie."

Such was Robin's letter. "Read it again," said his mother—and I read it again; and when I had done so, she took it in her hand and pressed it to her lips and to her breast, and wept for "her poor bairn." At last, in a tone of despondency, she said—"But, oh, he doesna once particularly mention his mother's name in't."

"He surely does," said I; "I think he mentions us both."

So I took the letter again into my hand, and, at the foot corner of the third page, I saw what I had not observed before, the letters and words—"*P.S. Turn over*"

"P.S." said his mother; "who does that mean?"

"Oh!" said I, "it means nobody. It means that we have not read all the letter."

"Read it a', then—read it a'!" she cried.

And I turned to the last page, on the fold above the direction, and read—

"P.S.—But how am I to ask the forgiveness of my dear mother, for all the distress and anxiety that my folly and disobedience must have occasioned her. I start in my very sleep, and think that I hear her yearning and upbraiding If she knew how deep my repentance is, and how keen my misery for the grief which I have caused her, I would not have to ask her forgiveness twice. Dear father! dear mother!—both, both of you forgive your thoughtless son."

These last lines of his letter drowned us both in tears, and, for the space of several minutes, neither of us were able to speak. I was the first to break silence, and I said—"Agnes, our dear Robin is now a soldier, and he seems to like that way of life. But I dislike the thought of his being only a corporal, and I would wish to see him an officer. We have nobody in the world but him to care for He is our only son and heir, and I trust that all that we have will one day be his. Now, I believe that the matter of four or five hundred pounds will buy him a commission, and make him an officer, with a sword by his side, a sash round his waist, and a gold epaulette on his shoulder, with genteel pay and provision for life; besides setting him on the high road to be a general. Therefore, if ye approve of it, I will sell out stock to the amount that will buy him a commission."

"Oh," replied she, "ye needna ask me if I approve o' it; weel do ye ken that I will approve o' anything that will be for my bairn's benefit."

I accordingly lifted five hundred pounds, and, through the influence of a Parliament man, succeeded in procuring him a commission as an ensign. I thought the money well spent, as it tended to promote the respectability and prospects of my son.

Four years afterwards, his mother and I had the satisfaction of reading in the public papers, that he had been promoted to the rank of lieutenant upon the field, for his bravery. On the following day we received a letter from himself, confirming the tidings, which gave us great joy. Nevertheless, our joy was mingled with fears; for we were always apprehensive that some day or other we would find his name among the list of killed and wounded. And always the first thing that his mother said to me, when I took up the papers, was—"Read the list of the killed and wounded." And I always did so, with a slow, hesitating, and faltering voice, fearful that the next I should mention would be that of my son, Lieutenant Goldie.

There was very severe fighting at the time; and every post was bringing news concerning the war. One day, (I remember it was a King's fast-day,) several neighbours and myself were leaning upon the dike, upon the footpath opposite to my house, and waiting for the postman coming from Ayton, to hear what was the news of the day. As he approached us, I thought he looked very demure-like, which was not his usual; for he was as cheerful, active-looking a little man as you could possibly see.

"Well, Hughie," said I to him, holding out my hand for the papers, "ye look dull like to-day; I hope ye have no bad news?"

"I would hope not, Mr Goldie," said he; and, giving me the paper, walked on.

The moment that Agnes saw that I had got it, she came running out of the house, across the road, to hear, as usual, the list of the killed and wounded read, and my neighbours gathered round about me. There had been, I ought to tell ye, a severe battle, and both the French and our army claimed the victory; from which we may infer, that there was no great triumph on either side. But, agreeably to my wife's request, I first read over the list of the killed, wounded, and *missing*. I got over the two first mentioned; but, oh! at the very sight of the first name upon the missing list, I clasped my hands together, and the paper dropped upon the ground.

'O Robie! my son! my son!" I cried aloud.

Agnes uttered a piercing scream, and cried. "O my bairn!—what has happened my bairn? Is he dead? Tell me, is my Robie dead?"

Our neighbours gathered about her, and tried to comfort her; but she was insensible to all that they could say. The first name on the missing list was that of my gallant son. When the first shock was over, and I had composed myself a little, I also strove to console Agnes; but it was with great difficulty that we could convince her that Robin was not dead, and that the papers did not say he was wounded.

"Oh, then!" she cried, "what do they say about him. Tell me at once. Roger Goldie! how can ye, as the faither o' my bairn, keep me in suspense."

"O, dear Agnes," said I, "endeavour, if it be possible, to moderate your grief; I am sure ye know that I would not keep ye in suspense if I could avoid it. The papers only say that Robin is *amissing*."

"And what mean they by that?" she cried.

"Why," said I to her, "they mean that he, perhaps, pursued the enemy too far—or possibly that he may have fallen into their hands, and be a prisoner—but that he had not cast up when the accounts came away."

"Yes! yes!" she exclaimed, with great bitterness, "and it perhaps means that his body is lying dead upon the field, but hasna been found."

And she burst out into louder lamentations, and all our endeavours to comfort her were in vain; though, in fact, my sufferings were almost as great as hers.

We waited in the deepest anxiety for several days, always hoping that we would hear some tidings concerning him, but none came. I therefore wrote to the War-Office, and I wrote also to his Colonel. From the War-Office I received a letter from a clerk, saying that he was commanded to inform me, that they could give me no information relative to Lieutenant Goldie, beyond what was contained in the public prints. The whole letter did not exceed three lines. You would have said that the writer had been employed to write a certain number of letters in a day, at so much a day, and the sooner he got through his work the better. I set it down in my mind that he had never had a son amissing on the field of battle, or he never would have written an anxious and sorrowing father such a cold scrawl. He did not even say that, if they got any tidings concerning my son, that they would make me acquainted with them. He was only commanded to tell me that they did not know what I was, beyond everything on earth, desirous to ascertain. Though, perhaps, I ought to admit that, in a time of war, the clerks in the War-Office had something else to do than enter particularly into the feelings of every father that had a son in the army, and to answer all his queries.

From the Colonel, however, I received a long, and a very kind letter. He said many flattering things in praise of my gallant laddie, and assured me that the whole regiment deplored his being separated from them. He, however, had no doubt but that he had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and that, in some exchange of prisoners, or in the event of a peace, he would be restored to his parents and country again.

This letter gave us some consolation. It encouraged us to cherish the hope of pressing our beloved son again to our breasts, and of looking on his features, weeping and wondering at the alterations which time, war, and imprisonment had wrought upon them. But more than three years passed away, and not a syllable did we hear concerning him, that could throw the least light upon where he was, or whether he was dead or living. Anxiety preyed sadly upon his mother's health as well as upon her spirits, and I could not drive away a settled melancholy.

About that time a brother of mine, who was a bachelor, died in the East Indies, and left me four thousand pounds. This was a great addition to our fortune, and we hardly knew what to do with it. I may say that it made us more unhappy, for we thought that we had nobody to leave it to; and he who ought to have inherited it, and whom it would have made independent, we knew not whether he was in the land of the living, or a strange corpse in a foreign grave. Yet I resolved that, for his sake, I would not spend one farthing of it, but let it lie at interest; and I even provided in a will which I made, that unless he cast up, and claimed it, no one should derive any benefit from either principal or interest until fifty years after my death.

I have said, that the health of Agnes had broken down beneath her weight of sadness, and as she had a relation, who was a gentleman of much respectability, that then resided in the neighbourhood of Kelso, it was agreed that we should spend a few weeks in the summer at his house. I entertained the hope that society, and the beautiful scenery around Kelso, with the white chalky braes* overhung with trees, and the bonny islands in the Tweed, with mansions, palaces, and ruins, all embosomed in a paradise as fair and fertile as ever land could boast of, would have a tendency to cheer her spirits, and ease, if not remove, the one heavy and continuing sorrow, which lay like an everlasting nightmare upon her heart, weighing her to the grave.

* It is evidently from the beautiful chalk cliff near Ednam House (though now not a very prominent object) that Kelso derives its name—a is proved by the ancient spelling.

Her relation was a well-educated man, and he had been an officer in the army in his youth, and had seen foreign parts. He was also quite independent in his worldly circumstances, and as hospitable as he was independent. There were at that period a number of French officers, prisoners, at Kelso, and several of them, who were upon their parole, were visiters at the house of my wife's relation.

There was one amongst them, a fine, though stern-looking man of middle age, and who was addressed by the appellation of Count Berthé. He spoke our language almost as well as if he had been a native. He appeared to be interested when he heard that my name was Goldie, and one day after dinner, when the cloth was withdrawn, and my wife's relation had ordered the punch upon the table—"Ha! Goldie! Goldie!" said the Count, repeating my name—"I can tell one story—which concerns me much—concerning one Monsieur Goldie. When I was governor of the castle La ——, (he called it by some foreign name, which I cannot repeat to you,) there was brought to me, (he added,) to be placed under my charge, a young British officer, whose name was Goldie. I do not recollect the number of his regiment, for he was not in uniform when brought to me. He was a handsome man, but represented as a terrible one, who had made a violent attempt to escape after being taken prisoner, and his desperate bravery in the field was also recorded. I was requested to treat him with the respect due to a brave man, but, at the same time, to keep a strict watch over him, and to allow him even less liberty than I might do to an ordinary prisoner. His being a captive did not humble him; he treated his keepers and his guards with as much contempt as though he had been their conqueror on the field. We had confined his body, but there was no humbling of his spirit. I heard so much of him, that I took an interest in the haughty Briton. But he treated me with the same sullen disdain that he shewed towards my inferiors. I had a daughter, who was as dear to me as life itself, for she had had five brothers, and they had all fallen in the cause of the great emperor, with the tricolor on their brow, and the wing of the eagle over them. She was beautiful—beautiful as her sainted mother, than whom Italy boasted not a fairer daughter, (for she was a native of Rome.) Hers was not a beauty that you may see every day amongst a thousand in the regions of the north—hers was the rare beauty amongst ten thousand of the daughters of the sunny south, with a face beaming with as bright a loveliness, and I would say divinity, as the Medici. Of all the children which that fair being bore unto me, I had but one, a daughter, left—beautiful as I have said—beautiful as her mother. I had a garden beneath the castle, and over it was a terrace, in which the British prisoner, Goldie, was allowed to walk. They saw each other. They became acquainted with each other. He had despised all who approached; he had even treated me, who had his life in my hand, as a dog. But he did not so treat my daughter. I afterwards learned, when it was too late, that they had been seen exchanging looks, words, and signs with each other. He had been eighteen months my prisoner; and one morning when I awoke, I was told that my daughter was not to be found, and that the English prisoner, Lieutenant Goldie, also had escaped. I cursed both in my heart; for they had robbed me of my happiness—he had robbed me of my child; though she only could have accomplished it. Shortly after this, (and perhaps because of it,) I was again called into active service, where, in my first engagement, it was my lot to be made a prisoner, and sent here; and since then I have heard nothing of my daughter—my one, dear child—the image of her mother; and nothing of him—the villain who seduced her from me."

"Oh, sir," exclaimed I, "do not call him a villain, for if it be he that I hope it was, who escaped through the instrumentality of your daughter, and took her with him, he has not a drop of villain's blood in his whole body. Sir! sir! I have a son—a Lieutenant Goldie; and he has (as I hope) been a French prisoner from the time ye speak of. Therefore, tell me, I implore ye, what was he like. Was he six inches taller than his father, with light complexion, yellowish hair, an aqualine nose; full blue eyes, a mole upon his right cheek, and, at the time, ye saw him, apparently, perhaps, from two-and-twenty to three-and-twenty years of age. Oh, sir—Count, or whatever they call ye—if it be my son that your daughter has liberated and gone away with, she has fallen upon her feet; she has married a good, a kind, and a brave lad; and, though I should be the last to say it, the son of an honest man, who will leave him from five to six thousand pounds, besides his commission."

By the description which he gave me, I had no doubt but that my poor Robie, and the laddie who had run away with his daughter, (or, I might say, the laddie with whom his daughter had run away,) were one and the same person.

I ran into the next room, crying, "Agnes! Agnes! hear, woman! I have got news of Robie!"

"News o' my bairn!" she cried, before she saw me. "Speak, Roger! speak!"

I could hardly tell her all that the French Count had told me, and I could hardly get her to believe what she heard. But I took her into the room to him, and he told her everything over again. A hundred questions were asked backward and forward upon both sides, and there was not the smallest doubt, on either of our parts, but that it was my Robie that his daughter had liberated from the prison, and run off with.

"But oh, sir," said Agnes, "where are they now—baith o' my bairns—as you say I have twa? Where shall I find them?"

He said that he had but little doubt that they were safe for his daughter had powerful friends in France, and that as soon as a peace took place, (which he hoped would not be long,) we should all see them again.

Well, the long-wished-for peace came at last—and in both countries the captives were released from the places of their imprisonment. I have already twice mentioned the infirm state of my wife's health; and we were residing at Spittal, for the benefit of the sea air and bathing, and the Spa Well, (though it had not then gained its present fashionable popularity,) when a post-chaise drove to the door of our lodgings. An elderly gentleman stepped off from the dicky beside the driver, and out of the chaise came a young lady, a gentleman, and two bonny bairns. In a moment I discovered the elderly gentleman to be my old friend the French Count But, oh! how—how shall I tell you the rest! I had hardly looked upon the face of the younger stranger, when I saw my own features in the countenance of my long lost Robie! The lady was his wife—the Count's bonny daughter; and the bairns were their bairns. It is in vain for me to describe to you the feelings of Agnes; she was at first speechless and senseless, and then she threw her arms round Robie, and she threw them round his wife, and she took his bairns on her knee—and, oh! but she was proud at seeing herself a grandmother! We have all lived together in happiness from that day to this; and the more I see of Robie's wife, the more I think she is like an angel; and so thinks his mother. I have only to inform you, that bold Jonathan Barlowman was forced to leave the countryside shortly after his valiant display of courage, and since then nobody in Dunse has heard whether he be dead or living, and nobody cares. This is all I have to tell ye respecting the *false alarm*, and I hope ye are satisfied.

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

TRIALS AND TRIUMPHS

It was in the autumn of 1825, that a stranger was wandering by the side of the silver lakes and over the majestic mountains of romantic Cumberland. He was near the side of blue Keswick, and the light wind was scattering, in showers, the death-touched leaves upon the bright waters. Suddenly, the face of the lake became troubled, and dark ripples rose upon its bosom, as if the chained spirit of a storm struggled thereon to be free, and moved them. A louder rustling and a sound of agitation was heard among the trees, as though it were there also. Thick clouds gathered before the face of the sun, and darkness, like an angel's wrath, rolled along the brow of the mighty Skiddaw. In a few moments the thunder was heard bursting from the mountain sides, and its echoes reverbed, as the groaning of the great hills, through the glens. Thunder, lightning, and tempest, gathered round, and burst over the stranger. The cattle crowded together upon the hills, and the birds of heaven sought shelter in the woods. The stranger, also, looked around for a place of refuge.

Before him, at the distance of about a quarter of a mile, lay a sequestered and beautiful villa—round which mountain, wood, and water, and craggy cliff, were gathered—with a sloping lawn before it. It was a spot which the genius of romance might have made its habitation. The mansion was in keeping with the scenery, and towards it the stranger repaired for shelter.

He was requesting permission of a servant of the household, to be sheltered until the storm passed over, when the occupier of the mansion came himself to the door, and, with the frankness of an old friend, held out his hand, saying—"Come in—thou art welcome. At such a time the birds of heaven seek shelter, and find it in the thick branches of the woods; and surely man has a right to expect refuge in the habitations of his fellow-men. Follow me, friend, and rest here until the storm be past.

The stranger bowed, thanked him and followed him; but, ere they had sat down, the owner of the mansion again addressed his visitant, saying—"The inhabitants of the East ask no questions of strangers until they have given them water to wash their feet, and a change of garments, if required. I know no excuse which the people of the West can offer, why they should be less hospitable. I perceive that thy apparel is already drenched; therefore, my servant will provide thee with a change of raiment. Go, do as I request, that no harm overtake thee; and, in the meantime, I will order refreshment, after which, thou and I shall converse together."

There was a kindness in the manner, and an expression of benevolence in the aspect of his entertainer, which at once gratified and interested the stranger. The latter appeared to be about forty; but his hospitable entertainer was at least threescore. Care had engraven some wrinkles upon his brow, and the "silverings" of age were beginning to mingle thickly with his once brown hair; but his ruddy and open countenance spoke of the generosity of his disposition, and the health of his constitution.

When the stranger had put on dry raiment and partaken of food, his host ordered liquors to be brought; and when they were placed upon the table, he again addressed his guest, and said—"Here, sir, thou hast claret, port, and sherry—my cellar affords no other wines. Therefore, take thy choice. Be merry and wise; but, above all—be at home. The wayfaring man, and the man whom a storm drives into our house among the mountains, should need no second invitation. With me he is welcome to whatsoever is set before him. Therefore, use no ceremony, but consult thine own taste. For myself I am no wine-drinker. Its coldness agrees not with my stomach, and I prefer the distillation of our northern hills to the juice of the grapes of the sunny south. Therefore, friend, while I brew my punch, help thyself to whatsoever best pleaseth thee."

The stranger again thanked him, and having something of nationality about him, preferred joining him in a bowl prepared from the "mountain dew." They quickly discovered that they were what the world calls "kindred spirits,' and, before an hour had passed, the stranger told whence he came, what he had been, and what his intentions, in visiting that part of the country, were; but his name, he said, he did not intend to divulge to any one for a time. He might make it known in a few days, should he remain in the neighbourhood, and, perhaps, he never would.

"Well," said his host, "thou hast told me a considerable part of thy history, but thou hast withheld thy name: I will tell thee *all* mine, but, to be even with thee, t ou shalt not know my name either, (provided thou dost not know it already,) beyond that my Christian name is Robert."

I am (continued he) the first-born of a numerous family, and am twenty-four years older than the youngest of my parents' children. My father was what is called a 'statesman in this part of the country; by which you are not to understand that he was in any way connected with politics, or had any part in governing the affairs of the nation, but, simply, that he was the possessor of an estate containing some eighty acres, and which had descended to him from his ancestors, unimpaired and unencumbered. He was a kind husband and an indulgent father; but he was prov dent as neither. A better-hearted man never breathed. He was generous even to the committing of a crime against his own family; and the misfortune, the error—I might say the curse of his life—was, that he never knew the value of a shilling. It has been said that I possess my father's failing in this respect; but, through his example at all times as a warning before me, I have been enabled to regulate it, and to keep it within controllable limits. You have often heard it said, "Take care of the shillings, and the pounds will take care of themselves:" but this will not hold good in

every instance—as was the case with my father. He appeared to be one of those who did not stop to consider the value between a pound and a shilling. He was naturally a man of a strong intellect and a sound judgment; but his impulses were stronger still. He was a being of impulses. They hurried him away, and he stopped not to consult with calmer reason. With him to feel was to act. He generally saw and repented his error, before another had an opportunity of telling him of it, but not before it was too late; and these self-made discoveries never prevented him from falling into the same errors again. In the kindliness of his own heart he took *all* mankind to be good; he believed them to be better than they really were; or rather he believed no man to be a bad man until he had found him to be so. Now, sir, when I say that in this respect my father exercised too much both of faith and charity, thou must not think that I am shut up here like a cynic in this mountain solitude, to inflict upon every passenger my railings against his race. On the contrary, I have seen much of the world, and experienced much of its buffetings, of its storms, its calms, and its sunshine; I have also seen much of men; and I have seldom, I would almost say, I have never, met with one who had no redeeming quality. But, sir, I have seen and felt enough, to trust no man far until I have proved him. Yet my father was many times deceived, and he trusted again; and, if not the same parties, others under the same circumstances. He could not pass a beggar on the highway without relieving him; and, where he saw or heard that distress or misery existed, it was enough for him—he never inquired into the cause.

He was bringing up his family, not certainly in affluence, but in respectability; but his unthinking generosity, his open hand, and his open-heartedness, were frequently bringing him into trouble. One instance I will relate; it took place when I was a lad of eighteen. There resided in our neighbourhood an extensive manufacturer, who employed many people, and who was reputed to be very rich. He was also a man of ostentatious piety; and, young as I then was, his dragging forward religion in every conversation, and upon all occasions, led me to doubt whether he really had anything of religion in his heart. There were many, also, who disputed his wealth. But my father and he were as brothers. We perceived that he had gained an ascendency over him in all things; and often did my mother remonstrate with him, for being, as she said, led by a stranger, and caution him against what might be the consequences. For I ought to inform you, that the manufacturer had been but a few years in Cumberland, and no one knew his previous history. But my father would not hear the whisper of suspicion breathed against him.

My mother was a native of Dumfriesshire; her ancestors had taken a distinguished part in the wars of the Covenant; and, one evening, I was reading to her from her favourite volume, "*The Lives of the Scots Worthies*," when my father entered, and sat down in a corner of the room in silence, and evidently in deep sorrow. He leaned his brow upon his hand, and his spirit seemed troubled.

"William," said my mother, addressing him, "why do ye sit there? What has happened? There is something putting ye about."

He returned no answer to her inquiries; and approaching him, and taking his hand in hers, she added—"Oh! there is something the matter, or ye would never sit in that way, and have such a look. Are ye weel enough, William—or what is it?"

"Nothing! nothing!" said he. But the very manner in which he said it, and the trembling and quavering of his voice, were equivalent to saying—"Something! something!"

"Oh, dinna say to me, nothing!" said she; "for there is a something, and that is evident, or ye would never sit as ye are doing."

He struck his clenched hands upon his brow, and exclaimed—"Do not torment me!—do not add to my misery!"

"William! William!" cried my mother, "there is something wrong, and why will ye hide it from me? Have I been your wife for twenty years, and ye say I torment ye now, by my anxiety for your weelfare? O William! I am certain I didna deserve this treatment from you, neither did I think that ye were capable of acting in such a manner What is it that is troubling ye?"

"Nancy," he cried, in the vehemence of despair, "I have ruined you!—I have ruined my family! I have ruined my earthly comfort, my peace of mind, and my own soul!"

"Oh, dinna talk in that way, William!" she cried; "I ken now that something serious has happened; but, oh! whatever it be, let us bear it like Christians, and remember that we are Christians. What is it, William? Ye may confide in your wife now?"

"Nancy," said he, "I never was worthy of such a wife. But neither look on me, nor speak to me with kindness. I have brought you to beggary—I have brought my family to beggary—and I have brought myself to everlasting misery and despair!"

"O my dear!" said she, "dinna talk in such a heathen-like manner. If it be the case that we have lost all that we had, there is no help for it now; but I trust, and am assured, that ye will not have lost it in such a way as to make your family hang their head among folk, in remembrance of their faither's transaction. I am certain, already, that it is your foolish disposition to be everybody's friend, that has brought this upon ye. A thousand times have I warned ye of what, some day or other, would be the upshot; but ye would take no admonition from me."

"Oh!" added he, "I have misery enough, and more than enough, without your aggravating it by your dagger-drawing reflections."

He sat groaning, throughout the night, with his hand upon his brow; but the real cause of his misery he would not explain, farther than that he had brought himself and his family to ruin. But, with sunrise, the tale of our undoing was on every tongue; and all its particulars, and more than all, were not long in being conveyed to us. For a tale of distress hath the power of taking unto itself wings, and every wind of heaven will echo it, let it come whence it may, and let it go whence it may. I beheld, and I heard my mother doomed to receive the doleful *congratulations* of her friends—the prompt expression of their sympathy for her calamities. It was the first time, and it was the last, that many of them ever felt for human wo. But there are people in this world, who delight to go abroad with the tidings of tribulation on their tongue, and whose chief pleasure is to act the part of Job's comforters, or, I might say, of his messengers.

We learned that my father's bosom friend, the professedly wealthy and pious manufacturer, had been declared a bankrupt, and that my father had become liable on his account to the amount of two thousand pounds. His unguided generosity had previously compelled him to mortgage his property, and this calamity swallowed it up. Never will I forget the calmness, I might call it the philosophy, with which my mother received the tidings.

"I am glad," said she to the individual who first communicated to her the tidings, "that my children will have no cause to blush for their father's misfortunes; and I would rather endure the privations which those misfortunes may bring upon us, than feel the pangs of his conscience who has brought them upon his friend."

My father sank into a state of despondency, from which it required all our efforts to arouse him; and his despondency increased, when it was necessary that the money for which he had become liable, should be paid. The estate, which had been in the possession of his ancestors for a hun-

dred and fifty years, it became necessary to sell; and when it was sold, not only to the last acre, but even to our household furniture, it did not bring a sum sufficient to discharge the liabilities which he had incurred. Well do I remember the soul-harrowing day on which that sale took place. My father went out into the fields, and, in a small plantation, which before sunset was no longer to be his, sat down and wept. Even my mother, who hitherto had borne our trials with more than mere fortitude, sat down in a corner of the house, upon the humblest chair that was in it, and which she perhaps thought they would not sell, or that it would not be worth their selling, and there, with an infant child at her bosom, she rocked her head in misery, and her secret tears bedewed the cheeks of her babe.

That night, my father, my mother, and their children, sought refuge in a miserable garret in Carlisle. I, as I have already said, was the eldest, and perhaps the change in their circumstances affected me most deeply, and by me was most keenly felt.

Through yielding to the influence of feelings that were too susceptible, my father beheld his family suddenly plunged into destitution. It was a sad sight to behold my brothers and my sisters, who had ever been used to plenty, crying around him and around my mother, for bread to eat, when they were without credit, and their last coin was expended. My father did not shew the extreme agony of his spirit before his children, but he could not conceal that it lay like a cankerworm in his breast, preying upon his vitals. His strength withered away like a leaf in autumn; and what went most deeply to my mother's heart was, that he seemed as if ashamed to look his family in the face; and he appeared even as one who had committed a crime which he was anxious to conceal.

My mother, however, was a woman amongst ten thousand. Never did the slightest murmur escape her lips, to upbraid my father for what he had brought upon us; but, on the contrary, she daily, hourly, strove to cheer him, and to render him happy—to make him forget the past. But it was a vain task; misery haunted him by night and by day; there was despair in his very smile, and the teeth of self-reproach entered his soul. He was a man who had received more than what is called a common education; and a gentleman who had been his schoolfellow, and known him from his childhood, and who resided much abroad, appointed him to be his land steward. The emoluments of the office were not great, but they were sufficient to keep his family from want.

Under the circumstances in which they were now placed, I was too old to remain longer as a burden upon my parents. I therefore bade them a fond, a heart-rending farewell; and with less than four pounds in my pocket, took my passage from Whitehaven to Liverpool, from whence I was to proceed by land to London. Liverpool was then only beginning to emerge into its present commercial magnitude; and I carried with me letters to two merchants there, the one residing in Poole Lane, the other in Dale Street. Both received me civilly, and both asked me *what I could do?* It was a question which I believe had never occurred to me before, nor even to my father, up to the period of my shaking hands with him and bidding him farewell. I hesitated for a few seconds, and I believe that upon both occasions I stammered out the word—"*anything.*"

"You can do *anything*, can you?" said the first merchant sarcastically; "then you are a great deal too clever for me; and I suspect the situation of a servant of *all work* will suit you better than that of a clerk in a counting-house. Pray, are you acquainted with keeping books?"

I replied that I was not.

"Then," added he, "though you can do everything, that is one thing which I find you cannot do; and as it is the only thing that would be of any service to me, I shall not be able to avail myself of your otherwise universal attainments."

The cold, the sarcastic manner of this gentleman, made my very blood to freeze within my veins; a cold shivering (I might call it the mantle of despair) came over me, and my heart failed within me. I, however, proceeded to Dale Street, and delivered my letter to the other gentleman. He, as I have already intimated to you, inquired at me what I could do. And to him, also, my unfortunate answer was "*anything.*" He smiled, but there was a kindness in his smile, and he good-humouredly asked me what I meant by anything. I was as much at a loss to answer him, as I had been to answer the merchant I had left.

"Have you ever been in a merchant's office?" he inquired, "or had any practice as an accountant?"

"No," I replied.

"Then," added he, "I fear it will be difficult to find anything in Liverpool to answer your expectations, and I would not recommend you to waste time in it. If I could have promoted your views, I would have done so most cheerfully; but, as I cannot, here are three guineas—(for from the manner in which my friend speaks of you in his letter, I believe you to be a deserving youth)—they will help you onward in your journey, and in London you will meet with many chances of obtaining a situation, that you cannot find in Liverpool."

I burst into tears as he spoke, and put the money in my hands. The kindness of the one merchant had affected me more than the chilling irony of the other. The one roused my indignation, the other melted my heart. But I was indebted to both; for both had given me a lesson of what the world was, and both had rendered me more sensible of the dependence and hopelessness of my situation.

In order to husband my resources, I proceeded to London on foot, and when I arrived there, I found myself to be like a bird in a wilderness, or a helmless vessel on a dark sea. The magnitude of the city, its busy thousands, its groaning warehouses, where the treasures and luxuries of every corner of the globe are piled together, the splendour of its shops, the magnificence of its squares, and the lordly equipages which glittered in the midst of them, moved me not. They scarcely excited my observation. My soul was filled with thoughts of my own prospects; and I wandered, dreaming, from street to street, moving at a pace as though I had been sauntering by the side of one of my native lakes, and I appeared as the only individual in the great city who had no aim, and no urgent business which required me to move rapidly, as others did. I delivered all the letters that I brought with me, and I was again asked, as I had been in Liverpool—*what I could do?* But I did not, as I did there, reply, *anything.* I, however, was puzzled how to answer the question. The truth was, I was utterly ignorant of business. I had been brought up amongst those mountains, with merely a knowledge that there was such a thing. In fact, my ideas of it hardly extended beyond giving out goods with one hand, and receiving money for them in the other. The word *commerce* was to me as a phrase in a dead language. I had fancied to myself that the sea was a great lake, over the whole expanse of which I should be able to gaze at once, and see the four quarters of the globe around it; and my ideas of what ships were, were gathered from the boats which I had seen upon Keswick. On the day on which I left my parents' roof, I heard my old schoolmaster console them with the assurance, that "there was no fear of me, for *I was fit for anything.*" While such testimony, from his lips, comforted them, it cheered me also, and it caused me to look upon myself as a youth of high promise, and of yet higher expectations. But now, when I was left to myself, with all my talents and acquirements ready to be disposed of in any market, I found that my general qualifications, my fitness for anything amounted to being qualified

for nothing, when reduced to particulars. Days, weeks, months passed away, and I was still a wanderer upon the streets of the modern Babylon.

At length, when ready to lie down and die from hunger and from hopelessness, I obtained a situation as copying-clerk to a solicitor, at a salary of ten shillings a-week. In such a city as London, and where it was necessary to keep up a respectable appearance, this sum might be considered as inadequate to my wants. But it was not so. During the first ten weeks, I transmitted two pounds to my parents, to assist them. I always kept the proverb before my memory, that "a penny saved is a penny gained;" and I never took one from my pocket, until I had considered whether or not it was absolutely necessary to spend it. My food was of the simplest kind; and finding that I could not afford the expense of an eating-house, it consisted of a half-quartern loaf in the twenty-four hours, the one half of which was ate in the morning; the other in the evening. I "*kitchened*" my loaf, as they say in Scotland, with a pennyworth of butter, and occasionally with lettuce or a few radishes in their season; and the beverage with which I regaled myself, after my meals, was a glass of water from the nearest pump.

Upon this diet I became stouter, and was more healthy for the time, than ever I had been before; though I believe I have suffered for it since. It was my duty to lock up the office (or chambers, as they were called) at night, and to open them in the morning. I had not been many days in my situation, when the thought struck me, that, by locking myself within the chambers at night, instead of locking myself out, I might save the expense of a lodging. Again I said to myself that "a penny saved was a penny gained," and four chairs in the chambers became my couch, while the money which I would have given for a lodging was transmitted to my parents.

I had not been many months in this situation, when it was my fortune to render what he considered a service to a rich merchant in the city, who was a client of my employers. He made inquiry at me respecting the amount of my salary, and concerning my home and relatives. I found that he was from Westmoreland, and he offered me a situation in his counting-house, with a salary of eighty pounds a-year. My heart sprang in joy and in gratitude to my throat at his proposal. I seized his hand as though he had been my brother. I pressed it to my breast. A tear ran down my cheek and fell upon it. Even while I held his hand, I fancied to myself, that I beheld my parents and their children again sitting beneath the sunshine of independence, and blessing their first-born, who was "fit for anything."

I entered upon my new situation, and upon my income of eighty pounds a-year, in a few days, and received a quarter's salary in advance. I well knew that my father was still oppressed by liabilities, which he was endeavouring to discharge out of forty pounds a-year, which he received for his stewardship. I knew, and I felt also, that let a son do for a parent what he will, he can never repay a parent's love and a parent's cares. Who could repay a mother for her unceasing and anxious watchings over us in the helplessness of infancy, or a father in providing for all our wants, in teaching us to know good from evil? I fancied that thirty pounds a-year was enough and more than enough for all my wants, and I dwelt with fondness on the thought of remitting them fifty pounds out of my annual salary. Previous to entering the counting-house of the merchant, my delight at the pleasing anticipations before me robbed me of sleep, and for the first time caused me to feel the hardness of my bed upon the chairs of the solicitor's chambers.

However, with a heart overflowing with joy, I entered upon my mercantile avocations. Then, as I bustled along the streets, I felt within my heart as though in all London there was none greater than I; I was independent as the Lord Mayor—as happy as his Majesty. But there was one thing, a small matter, which I forgot—it was the proverb which I have twice quoted already, that "a penny saved is a penny gained." On leaving my occupation as a copying-clerk, I almost unconsciously left also my cheap and humble diet. My fellow clerks in the merchant's counting-house dined every day at a chop-house in Milk Street, and they requested me to join them. I had no longer an opportunity of eating my half loaf in secret, and I accompanied them. Each of us had generally a chop, for which we paid eightpence; a fried sole, for which we were charged a shilling; with a glass of porter during dinner, and a go of gin, as it was called, and sometimes *two*, afterwards. I did not wish to be singular, neither did I see how I could avoid doing as others did; and, moreover, I reasoned that, with eighty pounds a-year, I was justified in living comfortably. But this was not all. My associates were in the habit of having their crust and cheese, and their glass of porter, in the forenoons; and I had to join them in this also. And this, too, ran away with pence which might have been saved. But I had not been long amongst them, when I found that they had also evening clubs, where they met to enjoy a pipe and a glass, and hear the news of the day. Unless I joined one of these clubs, I found that I would be considered as—nobody. I accompanied a comrade to one of them, and as the glass, the song, and the merry jest went round, I was as a person ushered into a new world, delighted with all I saw. I became a nightly attender of the club; and although I never indulged to excess, I had completely forgotten the proverb which enabled me to assist my parents when I had but ten shillings a-week, and therefore it forgot me.

My landlady also informed me, that it was the rule of her establishment for her lodgers to breakfast in the house, and with this proposal, also, I deemed it necessary to comply. I had begun to yield to circumstances, and when, in such a case, the head is once bent, the whole body imperceptibly becomes prostrate.

But twelve months passed away, and instead of fifty pounds being sent to my parents, I found my entire eighty not only expended, but that I was ten pounds in debt. I called myself a fool, a madman, and many other names; for conscience burned within my bosom, and the glow of shame upon my cheek. But it was fruitless; a habit had been formed, and that habit was my master. I had involuntarily become its slave, and wanted resolution to become its master.

On entering upon my second year, my employer, who still retained a favourable opinion of me, increased my salary to a hundred a-year. But even when it had expired, instead of having assisted my parents, I still found myself in debt. I had left my twenty pounds of additional salary to take care of themselves, and at the same time I had forgotten to take care not only of the shillings which composed them, but of the pence which made up my whole income. I forgot that a hundred pounds quickly disappears in a free hand and leaves its owner wondering whither it has gone. At this period, the letters which I received from my parents sometimes indirectly hinted at the privations which they were enduring; but they never requested, or seemed to expect assistance from me. The consciousness of their circumstances, however, stung me to the soul; but it did not reclaim me, or turn me from the dark sea of thoughtless expenditure on which I had embarked. I experienced that a slight thread is sufficient to lead a man to temptation, but it requireth a strong cord and a strong hand to drag him again to repentance.

I seldom laid my head upon my pillow but I resolved that, on the following day, I would reform my course of life, and again practise economy. But, alas! I "resolved and re-resolved" and lived the same. At this period, however,

my own conscience was my only accuser and tormenter. For, although in a country town my habit of spending every evening with a club, at a tavern, might have been registered against me as a vice, in London it did not so militate, and was neither noted nor regarded. I was punctual in my attendance at the counting-house—always clean, and rather particular in my person; (and I must say, that I do not know a town on the face of the habitable globe, where the certificate of dandyism, or of something approaching to it, will be of greater service to a young man than in London. It has struck me a hundred times, that the two chief recommendations for obtaining a situation there, are *dress* and *address*.) I was not exactly what could be called a good-natured person, but there was a free and easy something about my disposition, which rendered me a favourite with my fellow-clerks. I also was pleased with their society, and it was seldom that I could resist the temptation of accompanying them wheresoever they went, when solicited, and which was in general to all their parties of pleasure. When I said to myself, in the language of Burns—"Come, go to, I will be wise," and began to practise retrenchment in one item of my expenditure, I heedlessly plunged into other sources equally extravagant. For my old maxim, which had proved a friend to me on my first coming to London, was completely forgotten; and I neither thought of saving a penny nor taking care of a shilling. Indeed, so far had I forgotten these maxims, that on many occasions I reasoned with myself, saying—"Oh, it is *only* a shilling or two—there is nothing in that. I will go, or I will do it." But I forgot the sum to which that *only*, repeated three hundred and odd times in the year, amounted. In short, I had fallen into a habit which would have prevented me, had my salary been a thousand a-year, from being either richer or happier than I was when I had but ten shillings a-week.

I, however, retained the good opinion of my employer; and in the third year of my engagement with him, I was sent as supercargo with a vessel to South America. It was to be a trading voyage, and the appointment conferred upon me was an honour which caused me to be envied by the other clerks in the counting-house. Some of my seniors sneered at my inexperience, and said I would bring home a "precious cargo, and a profitable account of my transactions." Those who were nearer my own age, saw nothing in me that I should have been chosen by our employer, and they agreed that he had preferred me, merely because I was a Border man, like himself. In truth, I wondered at his choice myself; for I was conscious of but few qualifications for the task imposed on me, although, three years before, I was thought, and considered myself—"fit for anything."

It was understood that our voyage would occupy between two and three years; and in order that I might provide myself with everything necessary for my lengthened travels on the sea, and my dealings on shore, my employer placed in my hands two hundred and fifty pounds, independent of letters of credit to foreign merchants, in various ports, in which I was to transact business.

But, on the very day on which I received the two hundred and fifty pounds, and about five days before I was to leave England, I received a letter from my father, to the following import:—

"My Dear Son,—It pains me to be the bearer to you of evil tidings, and the more so, as I know that they can only grieve you, and that it is not in your power to remove their cause Yet it is meet that you should know of them. You knew, and you felt the effects of the misfortunes which, a few years ago, overwhelmed me; but you knew not their extent. They still weigh me to the earth—they blast my prospects, and render powerless my energies. Yet there is no one whom I can accuse for my misfortunes; they, and the distresses of my family, are the work of my own hands. To-morrow I will be the inmate of a prison, for a debt of two hundred pounds, which still hangs over me. Your poor mother, and your brothers and sisters, will be left with no one to provide for them. Think of them, my dear son, and, if it be in your power, assist them."

Such was my father's letter, and every word in it went to my bosom as a sharp instrument. I took two hundred pounds from the two hundred and fifty that had been given to me to provide for my voyage, and transmitted them to my father, to relieve him from his distress. I perhaps acted unthinkingly, and sent more than I ought to have sent—but what will not a son do for a parent when his heart is touched?—and at all events I acted as he to whom the money was sent would have acted—from the impulse of the moment; in obedience to the first, the natural dictates of the heart.

I found that I had deprived myself of the power of obtaining many things which were necessary for the voyage: but I rejoiced in the thought of having given liberty to a parent, and happiness to his family; and my spirit enjoyed a secret triumph, which more than counterbalanced any trials I might have to endure.

But the day on which I was to leave Old England arrived, and within four days I saw its white cliffs sink and die away in the distance as a far-off cloud. We had been seven weeks at sea, when a strange vessel hove in sight, and made alongside of us. She had a suspicious appearance, and our captain pronounced her to be a pirate. As she drew nearer, we could perceive that her crew crowded her deck; and as she continued to bear down upon us, there could be little doubt of her intentions. Our deck was cleared and our few guns put in readiness for action. We were the heavier vessel of the two, but she carried three guns for our one, and it was evident that her crew were almost as ten to one. When the captain had seen everything made ready for action, he requested me to follow him to the cabin for a few moments, and when there he said—"Robert," for my Christian name I will communicate to you, "the pirate which is now bearing down upon us, is making three knots for our two. Within a quarter of an hour you will hear her shot whiz over us. I don't care so much for both our lives being endangered, for I know that already both our lives are *sold*; but I regret the issue of this *venture* for your sake and for my own, and also for that of our owner, for I am certain it would have proved a good one to us all. However, we must all heave-to in deep water or in shallow water some time or other, and the tide has overtaken you and me to-day. Therefore, my lad, don't let us look miserable about the matter. Only I have to tell you, (lest I should be one of the first to be swept off the deck when the business of the day begins,) that our old owner who, Heaven bless him! is a regular trump, said to me, just as I had got my papers from the Custom House, and he was shaking hands with me—'Tom,' said he, (for the old fellow always called me Tom,) 'look after that supercargo of mine that you've got on board. He is a countryman of my own. He does not know it, but his father and I used to paddle on Keswick lake together. I have liked him on that account since the first day I clapped my eyes on him, and therefore I took him into my employ But, though he didn't think that I saw it, I saw that the chaps of London were too much for him. Therefore, I say Tom,' said he, 'if you see him like to go too far, for the love I bear the boy, bring him up with a short cable.' Such, you see, my lad, is the love which our old owner has for you; and though you may have found him a little gruff now and then, (as I have done myself,) depend upon it he is a regular trump at the bottom. Therefore I say, let us fight for him now, as better is not to be, until we go to the bottom."

I felt a glow about my heart on account of the kindness of my master, and especially when I found that he was

aware of more than I thought he had discovered of my conduct while in London; but it was no time to indulge in a reverie of gratitude, when every moment I expected to hear a twenty-four pounder boom over our deck, and that, too, from the deck of a pirate, who did not chalk up mercy as one of his attributes.

I went upon deck with our captain, and I had not been there for five minutes, when a shot from the pirate damaged our rigging. At the same time she hoisted the black flag.

"It is all up, Bob," said our commander, addressing me; "let us die manfully. If I die first, sink the vessel before she fall into their hands."

"Trust to me, captain," cried I; "I will see that all is right. We shall win the day, or go to the bottom."

"Bravo! my hearty!" he exclaimed; "I wish you had been a sailor!"

The action now began in good earnest, and was kept up on either side with unyielding determination. But they fired three guns for our one, and ever and anon they made an attempt to board us. Our crew consisted of but fourteen men and three boys—the commander, the mate, and myself included. The mate fell at the first broadside which our enemy poured into us. We maintained the unequal fight for near an hour, when our captain also fell, calling out to me—"Stand out, Bob!—sink her, or beat them!"

"I will, captain!" cried I; but I don't believe that he lived to hear what I said to him. Our ship's company was reduced to five able men, and I lay amongst the wounded upon deck. We were boarded, overpowered in a moment, and our vessel became the prize of the pirates. The dead, and some of the wounded amongst our crew, were thrown overboard upon the instant. My appearance pleaded for me with the murderers, (even as I have said appearance pleads with a prevailing intercession on most occasions in London,) and in a state of unconsciousness I was borne on board their vessel. When I raised my eyes and became conscious of my situation, the pirate captain stood over me. My wounds had been bound up, and I aroused myself, and rose up in pain as one awoke from a dream.

"Your name!—your name!" said he, addressing me.

"Ha! we are captured, then!" replied I; "my name is of small consequence—I am your victim."

"Speak!" he cried vehemently—"you wrong me. You are our captives, but I wish to know *your* name. You are an Englishman—are you from Cumberland?—Were you not at the school of old Dominie Lindores?"

'I am—I was!" I gasped in agony.

"And do you," he continued, "do you remember the boy, who, before he was eighteen, and while he was a boarder at the school, ran to Gretna with an heiress from a neighbouring seminary."

"I do!—I do remember it!" I cried.

"And what," he exclaimed—"*what was his name?*"

'Belford!" said I.

"Belford!" he cried—"it was indeed Belford. I am not deceived! You are, indeed, my countryman. You are younger than I, but I remember you; I am the Belford of whom you have spoken. For auld langsyne, and for the sake of bonny Cumberland, no harm shall happen unto you, nor to any of your comrades. I have but one thing to say to you—*be obedient.*"

Pained and wounded as I was, I remembered him. I recollected him as having been a boy, some six years older than myself, at the same school, and in a senior class. But when I would have questioned him, he placed his fingers upon his lips, and said—"Speak no more to me at present. Do as I have said—*be obedient.*"

I thought it a strange thing to be placed a prisoner under the hatches of an old schoolfellow; but the assurance that he and I had trembled under the same birch, and played on the same hill-side together, gave me, with his promise of safety, some consolation. My hands were permitted to be at liberty, but my feet were ordered to be kept in irons; and when I went upon the deck I could not step more than six inches at a time. I knew not how my fellow-prisoners fared, for I never saw them.

One day I was requested, or rather I ought to say, ordered, to dine with the pirate-captain.

"Your name is Robert," said he to me; and I answered that it was.

"Well," he continued, "I wish to save your life, and if it were possible I would spare also your comrades. But there would be danger in doing so, and my fellows, whom I must sometimes humour, are to a man against it. I will try, however, either to place you on board a vessel that is not worth shot, or on some island where you are certain of being picked up. In the meantime, here is a purse for you, which you will find will do you more good on shore than any services of mine. A father and a mother's care," he added, "I have never known, and from rumour only do I suppose who my parents were. I owe mankind nothing for the kindness they have shewn me; and the same love and mercy which I have received from them, I have measured out to them again. Farewell!" he said, and left me.

I knew that he was the reputed son of a gentleman who had held extensive possessions in Cumberland, but that something of mystery hung over his birth, and that it was reported cruel and unjust means had been resorted to, to deprive him of his lawful inheritance.

His words produced no pleasant feeling in my mind. I found myself in the situation of a person who was pinioned to a certain spot, with a sword suspended over his head by a single hair. But while he spoke I fancied that I heard the sighs of a female in distress. When he left me they were repeated more audibly. I went towards a door in the cabin, which led to an apartment from whence the sound seemed to proceed. I attempted to open the door of the chamber, which was unlocked, and I entered it. Before me sat a lady whose age appeared to be below twenty. She raised her eyes towards me as I entered, and tears ran down her cheeks. Till then I had never seen a face so beautiful, and I will add, or felt beauty's power—I felt as if suddenly ushered into the presence of a being who was more than mortal.

Our interview I will not describe. We spoke little; and the words which we did speak were in low and hurried whispers. For we heard the sound of our tyrants' feet pacing over our head, and to have found us in conversation together might have been death to both. Almost without knowing what I said, or for lack of other words, I spoke of the possibility of our escape. A faint smile broke through her tears, and she twice waved her hand silently, as if to say, "It is hopeless!—it is hopeless!"

From that moment she was present in all my thoughts, when awake she became the one idea of my mind, and in sleep she was the object of my dreams. As I was indulged with some degree of liberty, we met frequently, and although our interviews were short, they were as "stolen water," or as "bread eaten in secret." Their existence was brief, but their memory long. I had informed her of my early acquaintance with the pirate commander, and of all that passed between us from the time of my becoming his prisoner. And when she had heard all, even she indulged in the dream that our escape might be possible.

It was about a week after my discovery of the fair captive, that I ascertained that two of those who had become prisoners with myself had joined the pirates, and the others had been cast into the sea. My fate their captain still left undecided. My anxiety to escape increased tenfold; but how it was to be accomplished, was a ques-

tion which for ever haunted me, but which I could never answer.

One day we came in contact with a Dutch lugger, laden with Hollands. The pirates boarded her, but they only *bled* the vessel, as they termed it; they did not take the whole cargo. With what they did take, however, they made a merry carousal; they first became uproarious in their mirth, and eventually they sobered down into a state in which a child might have bound them. I observed the change that was wrought upon them—I saw the advantage I had gained. My thoughts became fixed upon how to profit by it.

It was midnight—the moon of an eastern sky flashed upon the sea—the very waters of the mighty deep moved in silence. The few stars that were in the heavens were reflected back from its bosom. On board the vessel not a living creature stirred; the very man at the helm had fallen down as if dead. With the fetters upon my feet, I stood alone, the master of a dead crew. I seized an instrument that lay upon the deck, and endeavoured to unfasten the irons that fettered me. I succeeded in the attempt. It was with difficulty that I restrained from bursting into a shout of joy. But I recollected my situation. I stole on tiptoe to the cabin—I opened the door of the apartment where the fair captive was confined.

"Our hour is come," I whispered in her ear; "we must escape—follow me."

She started and would have spoken aloud, but I placed my finger on her lips, and whispered—"Be silent."

"I come, I come," she said. She followed me, and we ascended to the deck, and stood alone in the midst of the wild ocean, without knowing whither to direct our course. I unfastened the stern-boat, and lowered it into the sea. I descended into it with her beneath my arm, and cutting asunder the rope with which I had fastened it, I pulled away from the vessel, which was unto us both a prison-house. My arm was nerved with the strength of despair, and within a few hours I had lost sight of the pirate-ship. At daybreak on the following day, we were alone in the midst of the vast and solitary sea; and desperate as our situation then was, I felt a glow of happiness at the thought that I should be enabled either to save her life, or to risk mine to save her in whom, from the time that I had first seen her, my whole soul had become involved. I now felt and knew that it was in my power to serve her, that our fates were united; and, when I beheld her alone with me upon the wide ocean, I felt as though her life had been given into my hands, and we both were secure. The thought in which I indulged was realized. We had scarce been twelve hours upon the sea, when a vessel passed us at the distance of scarce a mile. I made signals, that she might discover us, and they were observed. She was bound for London, and we were taken on board. I may say that it was now that my acquaintance with the fair being whom I had rescued from the hands of those who would have destroyed her, began. Her beauty grew upon my sight as a summer sun increaseth in glory; and the more that I beheld it, the more did I become enchained by its power. It was now, for the first time, that I ventured to make inquiry concerning her name and birth; when I ascertained that her name was Charlotte Hastings; and, upon further inquiry, discovered that she was the niece, and the supposed heiress, of the merchant in whose employment I was. On making this discovery, my tongue became dumb. I felt that I loved her, because I had delivered her from death, or from what would have been worse than death. But when I knew that she was my superior in circumstances—the heiress of him in whose employment I was—I stood before her and was dumb. But there was a language in my eyes, while my tongue was silent; and though I spoke not, I had reason to know that she understood its meaning—for often I found her dark eyes anxiously fastened upon me; and while she gazed, the tears stole down her cheeks.

We arrived in London. On the day of our arrival, I went towards her, and said—"Madam, we must part."

"Part!" she exclaimed, "wherefore?—tell me wherefore?"

"There is a gulf between our stations," I answered, "which I cannot pass." She then knew nothing of my being but a clerk in her uncle's office, and I was resolved that she never should know. "Charlotte," I said, on first addressing her after landing, "fate has cast us together—in some degree it has mingled our destiny; yet we must part. Fate has gamboled with us—it has mocked us with a child's game. We must part now, not to meet again Farewell! I could have dreamed in your eyes—yea, I could have lived in the light that fell from them; but, Charlotte, it was not to be my lot—that happiness was reserved for others. We came to this country together; the wind and the waves spared us, and wed us. The troubled sea did not divide us. We escaped from the hands of our destroyers, and fate recorded us as one. But it may be necessary that we should part—for I know the difference between our stations; and, if it be so, despise not him that saved you."

Her uncle heard of our captivity and escape with the coldest indifference. Not a muscle of his face moved. The variation of a fraction in the price of the funds would have interested him more.

"I thank you," said he, "for having restored my kinswoman to freedom. Hereafter, it may be in my power to reward you for the act. In the meantime, you must undertake another voyage to the Brazils, which I trust will prove more fortunate than your last."

I had only been fourteen days in London, when, another vessel being fitted out, I was ordered again to embark. During that period, and from the day that I conducted her to her uncle's house, I had not been permitted to see the fair being whom I had rescued; nor did my employer, though I saw him daily, once mention her name to me, or in any way allude to her. Yet, during that period, by day and by night, her image had been ever present to my thoughts. There was a singularity in the conduct of the merchant, with regard to her, which surprised me. I resolved, before my departure, to ask his permission to bid her farewell. I did so.

"Young man," replied he, "romantic thoughts do not accord with the success of a merchant, and with romantic adventures he has but little to do. You imagine that you love my niece, and she perhaps entertains the same foolish thoughts concerning you. It is a delusion arising from the circumstances under which you became acquainted; but it will pass away as a reflection from the face of a mirror, and leave no trace of existence. When you return you may see her again, but not now."

Lovers are proverbial for their lack of patience, and this assuredly was putting mine to trial. But I knew the temper of the man with whom I had to deal, and, yielding to necessity, I sailed without seeing her.

I had been absent for more than two years, and prospered exceedingly in all my dealings. On my return homeward, I had to visit Genoa. On the day of my arrival there, a person accosted me on the street by name. Without seeing the speaker when he accosted me, I started at his voice, for I remembered it well. It was Belford the pirate.

"Well," said he, in a sort of whisper, "I give you credit for the manner in which you effected your escape. But you robbed me of a prize which should not have been ransomed for less than a thousand pounds. And, before we part," added he gravely, "you shall give me your hand and seal to pay me that sum on the day that she becomes your wife."

I could not forbear a smile at the strange demand, and said that it should be readily complied with, if ever the event of which he spoke, took place; but of that, I assured him, there was but small hope.

"Fool!" said he, "know ye not that the old merchant, her father, intends that ye shall be wed on your arrival in England? And think ye that I know not that ye are to succeed him in business?"

"Her father!" I exclaimed—"of whom do you speak? I know him not. Or do you speak only to mock me?"

"By my right hand," said he, "I speak seriously, and the truth. She believes, and you believe that she is the niece of old Hastings, your master. She is his daughter—the only daughter of a fair but frail wife, who eloped from him while his child was yet an infant, leaving it to his care. In order to forget the shame which his frail partner had brought upon him, he, from that day, refused to see his child, lest her features should remind him of her mother. The girl was sent to Boulogne, where she remained till within two months of the time, when you saw her on board of my good privateer. You look astonished," added he—"does my narrative surprise you?"

"It does indeed surprise me," I replied; "but how come you to know these things?"

"Oh," replied he, "I know them, and require but small help from divination. Nine years ago, I was commander of one of old Hastings' vessels; and because I was a native of the Borders, forsooth, I, like you, was a favourite with him. He entrusted me with the secret of his having a daughter. Frequently, when I had occasion to put into Boulogne, I carried her presents from him. He also ordered me to bring him over her portrait, and when the old boy took it in his hands, and held it before his face, he wept as though he had been a child. He used me crookedly at last, however; for he accused me of dishonesty, and attempted to bring me to punishment. I was then as honest as noonday, and on land I am honest still, although I have done some bold business upon the high seas. I made a vow that I would be revenged upon him, and, but that you thwarted me, I would have been revenged. I ran my brig into Boulogne. I pretended that I had a message to Miss Hastings from her father, or, as I termed him, her uncle, and that she was to accompany me to England. As I had frequently been the bearer of communications from him before, my tale was believed. She accompanied me on board the brig; and we sailed, not for England, but on a roving cruise, as a king of the open sea. I was resolved that no harm should befal her; but I had also determined that she should not again set her foot upon land, until her father came down with a thousand pounds as a ransom. Of that thousand pounds you deprived me. But on your marriage day—at the very altar—payment will be demanded. It is not for myself that I desire it," said he, seriously, "for I am a careless fellow, and am content with what the sea gives to me; but I have a son in Cumberland, who will now be about seven years of age. His mother is dead, for my forsaking her broke the poor thing's heart, and hurried her to the grave. My son, I believe, is now the inmate of a workhouse. It is better that he should remain there, than be trained to the gallows by his father. Yet I should wish to see him provided for, and your wife's ransom shall be his inheritance. Give me your bond, and when you again see this dagger, be ready to fulfil it."

As he spoke, he exhibited a small poniard, which he carried concealed beneath his coat. I conceived that his brain was affected, and merely to humour him I agreed to his strange demand.

His words gave birth to wild thoughts, and with an anxious heart I hastened to return to England. My employer received me as though I had not been absent for a week.

"You have done well," he said; "I am satisfied with your undertaking. You did not this time meet with pirates, nor captive damsels to rescue." I hesitated to reply, and I mentioned that I had met and spoken with the pirate commander at Genoa.

He glanced at me sharply for a moment, and added—"Merchants should not converse with robbers."

He sat thoughtful for the space of half an hour, and then requested me to accompany him into his private office. When there, he said—

"You inform me that you have again seen Belford, the pirate, and that you have spoken with him. What said he to you? Tell me all—conceal nothing."

I again hesitated, and sought to evade the subject. But he added, more decisively—"Speak on—hide nothing—fear nothing."

I did tell him all, and he sat and heard me unmoved.

When I concluded, he took my hand and said—"It is well you have spoken honestly. Listen to me. Charlotte is indeed my daughter. Time has not diminished your affection for each other, which I was afraid was too romantic in its origin to endure. I have put your attachment to each other to severe trials; let it now triumph. Follow me," he added, "and I will conduct you to her."

I was blind with happiness, and almost believed that what I heard was but a dream—the fond whispering of an excited brain. I will not describe to you my interview with my Charlotte; I could not—words could not. It was an hour of breathless, of measureless joy. She was more beautiful than ever, and love and joy beamed from her eyes.

Our wedding-day came—her father placed her hands in mine, and blessed us. We were leaving the church, when a person in the porch, whose figure was wrapt up in a cloak, approached me, and revealing the point of a dagger, whispered—"Remember your bond!"

It was Belford, the daring pirate. I kept faith with him, and he received the money.

I will not detain you longer with my history, with my Trials and Triumphs. One of the first acts of my Charlotte was to purchase the estate which had been torn from my father, and she presented it to him as his daughter's gift. On retiring from business, I came to reside on it, and built on it this house, which has sheltered you from the storm.

"And your name," said the listener, "is Mr Melvin?"

"It is," replied the host.

"Then startle not," continued the stranger, "when you hear that mine is Belford! I am the son of the pirate. My father died not as he had lived. When upon his deathbed, he sent for me, and on leaving me his treasure, which was considerable, he commanded me to repay you the thousand pounds which he so strangely exacted from you. From the day on which he received it, he abandoned his desperate course, and through honest dealings became rich. I have brought you your money, with interest up to the present time."

So saying, the stranger placed a pocketbook in the hands of his entertainer, and hastily exclaiming "Farewell!" hurried from the house, and was no more heard of.



WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE LAIDLEY WORM OF SPINDLESTON HEUGH.

A TALE OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

"Word went east, and word went west,
And word is gone over the sea,
That a Laidley Worm in Spindleston Heugh
Would ruin the north countrie.

"All folks believe within the shire
This story to be true,
And they all run to Spindleston
The cave and trough to view.

"This fact now Duncan Frazier,
Of Cheviot, sings in rhyme,
Lest Bamboroughshire-men should forget
Some part of it in time."—*Ancient Ballad.**

"Tell me, old man," said a Northumbrian chief to a Saxon bard who claimed his hospitality, "tell me a tale of the olden time—a legend of the race of Woden."

The bard bowed his head and began:—Great was Ida, the flame-bearer, above all the kings of the isles. His ships covered the sea in shoals, and his warriors, that launched them on the deep, were stronger than its waves. He built the towers of Bamborough on the mighty rock whose shadow darkens the waters. He reared it as a habitation for his queen, and he called it by her name.† Wheresoever he went, strong places were consumed, kings were overthrown and became his servants, and nations became one. But Ida, in the midst of his conquests, fell in battle, by the red sword of Owen, the avenging Briton. Then followed six kings who reigned over Bernicia, from the southern Tyne even to the Frith of Dun Edin. But the duration of their sovereignty was as a summer cloud or morning dew. Their reigns were as six spans from an infant's hand, and peaceful as an infant's slumber.

But to them succeeded Ethelfrith the Fierce—the grandson of Ida—the descendant of the immortal Woden. His voice, when his ire was kindled, was like the sound of deep thunder, and his vengeance fleeter than the lightning. He overthrew princes as reeds, and he swept armies before him as stubble. His conquests extended from where clouds sleep on the brow of Cheviot, to where the heights of terrific Snowdon pierce heaven. Men trembled at his name; for he was as a wolf in the fold, as an eagle amongst the lesser birds of heaven.

Now, the wife of Ethelfrith's bosom died; she departed to the place of spirits—to the company of her fathers. She left behind her a daughter, Agitha,* with the tresses of the raven's wing; and she was beautiful as sunbeams sparkling from morning dew amongst the flowers of spring. Her eyes were bright as the falcon's, but with their brightness was mingled the meekness of the dove's. The breath of sixteen summers had fanned her cheeks. Her bosom was white as the snow that lay in winter on the hills, and soft as the plumage of the sea-fowl that soared over the rocks of her lofty dwelling.

A hundred princes sighed for the hand of the bright-haired Agitha; but their tales of love had no music for her ear, and they jarred upon her soul as the sounds of a broken instrument. She bent her ear only to listen to the song of affection from the lips of the Chylde Wynde—even to Chylde Wynde of the sharp sword and the unerring bow, who was her own kinsman, the son of her father's brother. His voice was to her as the music of water brooks to the weary and fainting traveller—dear as the shout of triumph to a conquering king. Great was the Chylde Wynde among the heroes of Bernicia. He had honoured the shield of his father. He had rendered his sword terrible. Where the battle raged fiercest, there was his voice heard, there was his sword seen; war-horses and their riders fell before it—it arrested the fury of the chariots of war. Bards recorded his deeds in immortal strains, and Agitha sang them in secret.

Yet would not Ethelfrith listen to the prayer of his kinsman, but his anger was kindled against him. The fierce king loved his daughter, but he loved dominion more. It was dearer to him than the light of heaven, than the face of the blessed sun. He waded through blood as water, even the blood of his victims, to set his feet upon thrones. He said unto himself—"Agitha is beautiful—she is fairer than her mother was. She is stately as a pine, lifting its head above the sacred oaks. She is lovely as the moon when it blesseth the harvest fields. A king only shall possess her hand, and give a kingdom in exchange for it."

Thus spoke her father, the mighty Ethelfrith, whose word was power, and whose purpose was fixed as the everlasting rocks on which the foundations of the earth are built. He said, therefore, unto the Chylde Wynde—"Strong art thou in battle, son of my brother; the mighty bend before thy spear, and thy javelins pierce through the shields of our enemies. As an eagle descendeth on its prey, so rusheth my kinsman to the onset. But thou hast no nation to serve thee—no throne to offer for my daughter's hand. Whoso calleth himself her husband, shall for that title exchange the name of king, and become tributary unto me—even as my sword, before which thrones shake and nations tremble, has caused others to do homage. Go, therefore, son of my bro-

* The popular Ballad of the Laidley (or loathly) Worm of Spindleston Heugh, was composed by Duncan Frazier, the Cheviot bard, more than five hundred years ago, and has rendered the legend familiar far beyond the Borders. The tradition had doubtless been commemorated by the ancient Saxon bards, when old Duncan turned it into rhyme; and it is under this supposition that the present tale is told, the narrator being understood to be a wandering bard of the Saxon race.

† According to the venerable Bede, the name of Ida's queen was Bidda, and the original name of Bamborough, Biddaburgh.

* In the old ballad she is called Margaret.

ther, take with thee ships and warriors, and seek thee a people to conquer. Go, find a land to possess; and when with thy sword and with thy bow thou hast done this, return ye to me, bringing a crown in thy left hand, and in thy right will I place the hand of Agitha with the bright hair, whose eyes are as stars."

"O king!" answered the Chylde—"thou who holdest the fate of princes in thy hands, and the shadow of whose sceptre stretcheth over many nations—the uplifting of whose arm turneth the tide of battle—swear unto me, by the spirit of mighty Woden, that while I am doing that which thou requirest, and ere I can return to lay a crown at thy feet, swear that thou will not bless another king for an offered kingdom, with the hand of Agitha, in whom my soul liveth!"

Then did the wrath of the king wax terrible; his eyes were as consuming fires, even as the fire of heaven when it darteth from the dark clouds of midnight. His countenance was fierce as the sea, when its waves boil and are lifted up with the tempest. In his wrath he dashed his heel upon the floor; and the armour of conquered kings, the spoils of a hundred battles, rang round the halls of Ida.

"Shall the blood of my brother," he cried, "stain the floor of his father? Boy! ask ye an oath from a king, the descendant of Woden?* Away! do as I command thee, lest ye perish!"

Then did the Chylde Wynde withdraw from before the anger of the great king, in the presence of whom, in his wrath, the life even of his kindred was as a spider's thread. He sought Agitha with the rainbow smile, where she sat with her maidens, in the groves of Budle, ornamenting a robe of skins for her father, the mighty Ethelfrith. The sea sang its anthem of power along the shore, and the caves of the rocks resounded with the chorus of the eternal hymn. The farthest branches of the grove bent over the cliff that overhung the sounding sea. The birds of heaven sang over her head, and before her the sea-birds wheeled in myriads, countless as the sand upon the shore, like burnished clouds over the adjacent isles. Their bright wings flashed in the sun, like the fitful fires that light the northern heavens.

The warrior Chylde drew near where the princess sat. There was gloom and sorrow on his brow. The echoes of the grove answered to his sighs. Agitha heard them. She beheld the cloud of anguish that was before his countenance. The robe of skins dropped from her hand. Her eyes, that were as the morning light, became dim. She arose and went forward to meet him.

"Wherefore," she inquired, "does my hero sigh, and why sits heaviness on the brightness of his face? Art not thou renowned in song as the warrior of the dauntless heart and the resistless sword? Art not thou the envy of princes—the beloved of the people—the admired by the daughters of kings? And can sadness dwell upon thy soul? Oh! thou who art as the plume of my father's warriors, and as the pride of his host, if grief hath entered into thy bosom, let it be buried in mine."

Then thus replied the warrior Childe:—"Agitha—thou that art fairer, milder than the light that plays around the brows of the summer moon, and dearer to me than a mother's milk to the lips of her babe—it is for thee that my countenance is sad, and my soul troubled. For thy father has pierced my spirit with many arrows; yea, even with the poisoned arrows of a deadly foe. He hath wrung my soul for thee, Agitha. Thou didst give me thy heart when the sacred moon rose over the rocky Ferns and beheld us; and while the ministering spirits that dwell in its beams descended as a shower of burning gold upon the sea, and, stretching to the shore, heard us. We exchanged our vows beneath the light of the hallowed orb, while the stars of heaven hid their faces before it. Then, Agitha, while its beams glowed on my father's sword, upon that sword I swore to love thee. But our vows are vain. Daughter of kings! our love is sorrow. Thy father hath vowed, by the mighty Woden, that thou shalt be the wife of a king, and that a kingdom shall be the price of thy hand. Yet will I gather my warriors together. They number a thousand spears; they have a thousand bows. The charge of their spears is as the rushing of the whirlwind. The flight of their arrows hides the face of the sun. Foes perish at their approach. Victory goeth before their face. Therefore will I go forth into a far country. I will make war upon a strange people that I may take the kingdom from their ruler, and present his crown unto thy father for the hand of my Agitha."

The maiden wept. Her head sank on her bosom like a fair flower weighed down with dew. Tears stood in the eyes of the warrior.

"Weep not, daughter of heroes!" he said; "the tide of battle is in the hands of Woden. He will not turn it against a descendant of his race. I will return to thee in triumph. I will throw a crown at thy father's feet, and rush to the arms of Agitha. Thou wilt greet me again with thy smile of love—with thy voice that is sweeter than the music of spring. Thy heart, which is dearer than life, shall be my kingdom; and thy bosom, that is whiter than the breast of the wild swan, my throne. I will fly to thee as the hunted deer to its covert—as a bird to its nest where its young await it."

Thus departed the warrior, and Agitha returned to her maidens; she sat down amongst them and mourned.

Gormack, the weird, a thane of the Pictish race, had his dwelling near the giddy cliffs where the young eagles scream to the roar of the dark waters of the Forth. He had a daughter whose beauty was the theme of all tongues. Her fame went over the land like the sound of shells—yea, like the sound of shells when the wind is hushed, and the moon is bright in the heavens. Fair was the daughter of Gormack as the lily that groweth by the brook. Her hair was as the finest fleece when it is purified. It fell down her back in ringlets. It was bright as the golden clouds that encircle the throne of the rising sun—as the golden clouds when they are dipped in silver. Her father held counsel with spirits of evil. They were obedient to his will. He invoked them to endue his daughter with more than mortal beauty, that she might inflame the soul of princes, and sit upon their throne. Such was the tale of men. Her beauty was the burden of the song of bards. In their chorus to swell the praise of others. they said that they were "lovely as the fair daughter of Gormack."

The tale of her charms was heard by Ethelfrith. It was heard by the fierce in war—the impetuous in love—the victor in battle—yea, even by Ethelfrith, king of Bernicia. "I will see the fair daughter of the thane," said the proud king, to whose will even war and the mighty in war did homage. Moreover, Gormack the thane was his vassal. He had sworn to his obedience.

The king went forth to the dwelling of Gormack, among the cliffs. Ealdormen,* comites,† and thanes,‡ attended him. The weird thane came forth to meet him; he bowed his head and made obeisance.

Ethelfrith beheld Bethoc the Beautiful; and the songs that he had heard in her praise were as an idle tale, for her loveliness exceeded the power of song. The soul of the fierce king melted within him. It was subdued by the sorcery of her charms.

* It may be necessary to mention, that the imaginary deities of the Saxons were named Woden, Tuisco, Thor, Frea, and Seator. They also worshipped the sun and moon. Woden was their god of war; and from him Ida and his descendants professed to spring. It is after these objects of pagan worship, that we still name the days of the week; as Woden's day (Wednesday,) Thor's day (Thursday,) Frea's day (Friday,) &c. &c.

* Earls. † Companions.

‡ Thanes signified men high in power, of various degrees of rank

"Give me," said he unto her father—and commandments ever fell from his lips—"give me Bethoc to be my wife; for she is more lovely than the morning star. She is fit for a warrior's bride; she shall be THE LADY* of Bernicia."

Again the weird bowed his head. He knelt upon his knee. He presented his daughter to the king. Then did Ethelfrith take her by the hand. He led her forth to his chariot of war, through the midst of his caldormen, his comites, and his thanes, who were great in power and resistless in war, and they made obeisance to her as she passed through the midst of them. They saluted her as their queen. Her breast swelled with exultation. Pride flashed from her eyes, as the sun bursting from a cloud dazzleth the eye of the gazer. The king gazed upon her beauty as a dreamer on a fair vision.

Now, the beauty of Bethoc was sin made lovely. Her bosom was as a hill where the vine and the cedar grew, and where flowers shed forth perfume; but beneath which a volcano slept. To the eye was beauty, beyond were desolation and death. Pride, hatred, and envy, encircled her soul. She was sold unto evil, even as her father was. The spirit of destruction, in answer to her father's prayer, had formed her a beautiful destroyer. Whatsoever was lovely that she looked upon in envy, withered as though an east wind passed over it—the destroying wind which blighteth the hopes of the husbandman.

At the going down of the sun, the king, and his fair queen, Bethoc, with his mighty men, drew near to the tower which Ida had built on the mountain-rock, and all the people of the city came forth to meet him, and to greet their queen. The bards lifted up their voice; they styled her the fairest of women.

"Fair is the wife of the king," replied an aged thane, "but fairer is Agitha his daughter! Bethoc, the queen, is a bright star, but Agitha is the star of the morning—fairest of the heavens!"

Queen Bethoc heard the words of the aged thane, and she hated Agitha because of them. The spirit of evil spread his darkness over her soul. He filled her breast with the poison of asps, her eyes with the venom of the adder that lures to destruction.

At the entrance of the tower of kings, stood Agitha, lovely as the spirits that dwell among the stars, and give beauty to the beings of earth. She knelt before the queen. She offered her a daughter's homage.

"Rise, beautiful one! inspirer of song!" said the queen; "kneel not to me, for I am but a star—thou art the star of the morning. Hide not thy face from before men. Let them serve and worship thee."

Cold were her words as water which droppeth from the everlasting icicles in the caves of the north. As is the mercy of the tears of the crocodile, so was the kindness of her looks. Envy and hatred gleamed in her eyes, like lightnings round the sides of a dark cloud.

The countenance of Agitha fell; for she knew that her father in his wrath was fiercer than the wild boar of the forest when at bay; and she feared to reply to the sneer of the wife in whom his eyes delighted.

Queen Bethoc, the daughter of Gormack, knew that men said she was less beautiful than Agitha, the daughter of the king. When they walked by the clear fountains or the crystal brooks together, the fountains and the brooks whispered to her the words which men spoke—"Agitha is the most lovely." Therefore did the queen hate Agitha with a great and deadly hatred. As the sleuth-hound seeketh its prey, so did she seek her destruction. As the fowler lureth the bird into his net, so did she lie in wait for her. Yet she feared to destroy her openly, because that she was afraid of the fierce anger of her husband Ethelfrith, and his love for his daughter was great.

Sleep fled from her eyes, and colour forsook her cheeks, because of her envy of the beauty of Agitha, and the hatred which she bore her. She spoke unto her father Gormack, the weird thane, that he would aid her with his sorceries against her. Then did they practise their unclean spells, and perform their dark incantations to destroy her; but their spells and incantations prevailed not, for the spirit of Woden protected Agitha.

Now, there resided at that time in a dark cave, in the heugh which is called Spindleston, an enchantress of great power, named Elgiva—the worker of wonders. Men said that she could weave ropes of sand, and threads from the motes of the sunbeams. She could call down fire from the clouds, and transform all things by the waving of her magic wand. Around her hung a loose robe, composed of the skins of many beasts. Her feet and her arms were bare, and they were painted with strange figures. On her face, also, was the likeness of the spirits that ministered to her will. She was fearful to look upon. Men fled at her approach. The beasts of the field were scared by her shadow. Round her head was wreathed a crown of fantastic hemlock—round her neck a corslet of deadly nightshade. On her left arm coiled a living snake, and it rested its head upon her bosom. In her right hand she held a wand dipped in the poison of all things venomous. Whatsoever it touched died. Whatsoever it waved over was transformed. No human foot approached her cave—no mortal dared. The warrior, who feared not a hundred foes, quailed at the sight of Elgiva, the enchantress, the worker of wonders. Unclean reptiles crawled around her cave—the asp, the loathsome toad, and the hissing adder. Two owls sat in the farthest corner of the cave, and their eyes were as lamps in its darkness. They sat upon skulls of the dead. A tame raven croaked in the midst of it. It was told that the reptiles, the owls, and the raven, were objects of her enchantment—warriors, and the daughters of warriors, transformed by the waving of her wand.

Now, when Bethoc could find no rest because of the greatness of her hatred for Agitha; and, moreover, as she herself had communed with impure spirits, she overcame the terror which the name of Elgiva spread. She sought her aid. In the dead of night, when the moon had gone to rest, yea, when clouds and darkness had blotted out the stars that were left to watch in the heavens, she went forth from the tower of kings. She stood before the cave of the enchantress. She lifted up her voice and cried—"Elgiva—worker of wonders! the feared of mortals!—come forth!"

The owls clapped their wings and screamed; the ravens croaked, and the adders hissed. From the darkness of her cave the voice of the enchantress came forth—it came forth as a voice from the grave, saying—"Who amongst the children of mortals dareth to call upon the name of Elgiva?—or, what deed of sin bringeth thee hither?"

"The queen," answered Bethoc, "the wife of the mighty Ethelfrith, she calleth thee, she invoketh thine aid. The strongest spirits obey thee—the spirits of the earth, of the air, and of the sea. Then help me, thou that art more powerful than the kings of the earth, that art stronger than the fate of the stars; help—rid me of mine enemy whom I hate, even of Agitha, the daughter of the king. Make her as one of the poisoned worms that crawl within thy cave. Or, if thou wilt not do this thing to serve me, when my right hand hath shed her blood, turn from me the fierce wrath of her father the king."

Again the voice of the enchantress came forth from the cave, saying—"In seven days come unto me again—bring with thee the Princess Agitha; and Elgiva, the enchantress, will do towards her as Bethoc, the daughter of the weird thane, hath requested."

* THE LADY was the appellation given to a queen amongst the Anglo-Saxons.

Thus did the queen, while Ethelfrith, her lord, was making war against a strange king in a far country.

Darkness lay heavy on the hills, it concealed the objects on the plains. The seven days, of which the enchantress had spoken, were expired.

"Maiden," said the queen unto Agitha, "rise and follow me."

Agitha obeyed; for the fear and the commandment of her father were upon her. Two servants, men of the Pictish race, also followed the queen. She went towards the cave of the enchantress. Agitha would have shrunk back, but the queen grasped her hand. The swords of the men of the Pictish race waved over her. They dragged her forward. They stood before the cave of the potent Elgiva.

"Elgiva! worker of wonders!" exclaimed the queen; "Bethoc, thy servant, is come. The victim also is here—Agitha, the morning-star. By thy power, which is stronger than the lightning, and invisible as the wind, render loathsome her beauty; yea, make her as a vile worm which crawleth on the ground, with venom in its mouth."

Again was heard the deep voice of the enchantress, mingled with the croaking of the raven, and the screeching of the owls, as she rushed from her cave, crying—"It shall be as thou hast said!"

Terror had entranced the soul of the fair Agitha—it had brought a sleep over her senses. The enchantress grasped her hand. She threw her arm around her.

"Away, accursed!" she exclaimed unto Bethoc the queen; "fly! lest the power of the enchantment fall upon thee also. Fly! lest it overtake thee as darkness overtaketh the benighted traveller. Fly! ere the wand of the worker of wonders is uplifted, and destruction come upon thee."

The followers of Bethoc quaked with dismay. They turned with her and fled to the tower of Ida. Of their outgoing and their incoming none knew.

The maidens of Bernicia wept when the loss of Agitha was known. "Beauty," said they, "hath perished. Agitha, whose face was as the face of heaven when its glories appear—as the face of the earth when its flowers give forth their fragrance—Agitha is not!" And because she was not, the people mourned. Queen Bethoc alone rejoiced, and was silent.

Dismay and wonder spread over the land—for a tale was told of a serpent-worm, fearful in magnitude and of monstrous form, which was seen at Spindleston, by the cave of Elgiva—the worker of wonders—the woman of power.

The people trembled. They said of the monster—"It is Agitha, the beloved!—the daughter of our king, of conquering Ethelfrith. Elgiva, the daughter of destruction, who communeth with the spirits of the air, and defeateth armies by the waving of her wand, hath done this. She hath cast her enchantments over Agitha, the fairest of women—the meekest among the daughters of princes."

The bards raised songs of lamentation for her fate. "Surely," said they, "when the Chylde Wynde cometh, his sword, which maketh the brave to fall and bringeth down the mighty, will break the enchantment." And the burden of the songs was—"Return, O valiant Chylde, conqueror of nations—thou who makest kings captives, return! Free the enchanted! Deliver the beautiful!"

Now, the people of the land where the Chylde and his warriors landed, were stricken with terror at their approach. They fled before them, as sheep fly upon the hills when the howl of the hungry wolf is heard. He overthrew their king, he took possession of his kingdom. He took his crown, and he brought it to Ethelfrith, whose ambition was boundless as the sea. He brought it as the price of Agitha's hand.

It was morn. The sun rose with his robes of glory o'er the sea. Bethoc, the daughter of Gormack the weird, stood upon the turrets of Ida's tower. She was performing incantations to the four winds of heaven. She called upon them to lift up the sea on their invisible wings, to raise its waves as mountains, and whelm the ships upon its bosom. But the winds obeyed not her voice, and the sea was still. In the bay of Budle lay the vessels of the Chylde Wynde, and the weapons of his warriors flashed in the sunbeams and upon the sea. Therefore was the spirit of Queen Bethoc troubled. It was troubled lest the enchantment should be broken—Agitha delivered from the spell, and her wrongs avenged.

As a great wave rolleth in majesty to the shore, so advanced the warrior ships of Chylde Wynde, the subduer of heroes. The people came forth to meet him with a shout of joy. "He is come," they cried; "the favoured of the stars the Chylde of the sharp sword, is come to deliver Agitha the beautiful, to break the spell of her enchantment."

He heard the dark tale. His bosom heaved. He rent the robe that covered him. His grief was as the howling of the winter wind, in a deep glen between great mountains. He threw himself upon the earth and wept.

But again the spirit of Woden came upon him. It burned within his bosom as a fierce flame. He started to his feet. To his lips he pressed the sword of his father. He vowed to break the enchantment that entombed his betrothed.

He rushed towards the cave of Elgiva, the worker of wonders. His warriors feared to follow him. The people stood back in dismay. For by the waving of Elgiva's wand she turned the swords of warriors upon themselves; she caused them to melt in their hands.

At the mouth of her cave stood the enchantress. By her side lay the serpent-worm.

"Daughter of wickedness!" shouted the Chylde, "break thy accursed spell; restore the fair form of my Agitha, else the blood of thy heart shall dissolve the charm."

"Hearken, O Chylde," cried the enchantress; "thou subduer of kings, thou vanquisher of the strong—sharp is thy sword, but against me it hath no power. Would it pierce the breast that suckled thee?—the breast of her that bore thee?"

From the hand of the warrior dropped his uplifted sword.

"Mother!" he exclaimed. He fell on his knees before her.

"Yea, thy mother," answered the enchantress; "who, when her warrior husband fell, fled to the desert, to the cave, and to the forest, for protection—even for protection from the love, and from the wrath of Ethelfrith the fierce, the brother of thy warrior father, whose eyes were as the eagle's, and his arm great of strength. Uncouth is the habit, wild is the figure, and idle the art of thy mother. Broken is her wand which the vulgar feared. That mine eyes might behold my son, this cave became my abode. Superstition walled it round with fire."

"And Agitha?" gasped the warrior.

"Behold!" answered she, "the loathly worm at the feet of thy mother."

The skins of fish of the deep sea were sewed together with cords—they were fashioned into the form of a great serpent.

"Come forth, my daughter!" cried the enchantress. Agitha sprang from her disguise of skins. She sank on the breast of her hero.

The people beheld her from afar. Their shout of joy rang across the sea. It was echoed among the hills. A scream rose from the tower of Ida. From the highest turret Bethoc the queen had sprung. In pieces was her body scattered at the foot of the great cliff. They were gathered together—they were buried in the cave of Elgiva. From her grave crawled an unclean beast, and it crawleth around it for ever.

Ethelfrith died in battle. Woden shut his eyes and saw him not, and he fell. And Elgiva, the enchantress, the worker of wonders, was hailed as Rowena, the mother of Wynde, the subduer of princes; yea, even of Chylde Wynde, the beloved, and the lord of Agitha the Beautiful.

Such was the tale of the Saxon bard.

JOHNNY BROTHERTON'S FIVE SUNNY DAYS.

I HAVE experienced many days both of sorrow and of sadness, in the course of my life and experience, (said old John Brotherton of Peebles;) but with me by-past sorrows were always like an auld almanac—a book that I never opened. Yet weel do I remember the five sunniest days of my existence. They were days of brightness and of joy, without a spot to cloud them. They took place, also, at very various periods of my existence. I no doubt have had, independent of them, many pleasant, warm, bonny days—days wherein I was both pleased and happy. But they passed away like any other fine day, and they werena remembered for a week. But very different from the like of these ordinary fine days, were those which I allude to as the five sunny days of my existence. They were days of pure, unadulterated, uncloyed, almost insupportable delight. They were days, the remembered sunshine of which will not set in my breast, until my life set in the grave. But I will give you an account of them.

The first occurred when I was about twenty years of age. It was a delightful evening in the month of September, on the second day of the month, and just about five minutes past six o'clock. I had just dropped work—for I was a souter, or more appropriately a cordwainer—and had thrown off my apron and washed my face, and I was taking a saunter up off the Tweed abit, on the road leading down to Innerleithen. I cannot say that I had any object in view, beyond just the healthful recreation of a walk in the fields, after the labours of the day. The sun seemed to be maybe about a dozen of yards aboon the hill top; but there wasna a cloud in the whole sky, save ae wee bit yellow one, hardly broader than the brim of a Quaker's hat, that was keeking owre the hill, as if to kep the sun. Oh, it was a glorious evening! I daresay it never was equalled at the season of the year. I am sure the leaves, poor things, that were falling here and there from the trees and hedges, if they could have thought, would hae been vexed to fall frae their branches, while a' nature was basking in such sunniness.

I met several shearers, wi' their hooks owre their arms, just as I was gaun out o' the town, and I spoke to them, and they spoke to me; but some o' them nodded and laughed at me, and said—"She's coming, Johnny."

"Wha's coming?" said I.

And they laughed again, and said—"Gang forward and see."

So I went forward, and sure enough, who should I see standing beside a yett, with her hook owre her shouther, and picking the prickles of a day-nettle out of her hand, but bonny Kate Lowrie—not only the comeliest lass in the burgh of Peebles, but in all the wide county. I had long been desperately in love with Katie, but I had never ventured to say as meikle to her; though I was aware that she was conscious of the state of my feelings. We had often walked together on an evening, and I had gien her her fairing, and the like of that, but I never could get the length of talking about love or marriage; and scores of times had her and me walked by the side of each other, for half an hour at a time, without either of us speaking a word, beyond saying—"Eh, but this is a fine night!" half a dozen times owre—so ye may guess that we were a bashfu' couple.

But on the night referred to, as I have said, I saw her standing at a yett, taking a thorn of some kind out of her hand; and I stepped forward and said to her—"What has got into your hand, Katie?"

"It's a jaggy frae a day-nettle, I think, John," said she.

"Let me try if I can tak it oot," said I.

She blushed, and the setting sun just streamed across her face. I'll declare I never saw a woman look so beautiful in my born days. Ye might have lighted a candle at my heart at the moment. I am certain. But I did get her bonny soft hand in mine; and as I held it, I am certain I would not have exchanged that hand to have held the sceptre of the king that sits upon the throne. I soon got out the prickles—but I was so overjoyed at having her hand in mine that when they were out, I still held it in my left hand; while, whether it was by accident or how, I canna tell, but I slipped my right hand round her waist; and in this fashion we sauntered away. But instead of going straight to the town, we daundered away down to Tweedside.

Weel do I remember of pressing her to my breast in more than mortal joy, and of saying to her—"O Katie, Katie, woman, will ye be mine?—will ye marry me, and mak me the happiest man that ever put his foot in a shoe on the face of this habitable globe?"

She hung her head, and, poor thing! her bosom heaved like a frighted bird's. But, oh! what ecstasy it was to feel its heaving! For a good hour did I stand pressing her breast to mine, and always saying—"Will ye, Katie? Oh, will ye, woman?"

At last, with a great effort, and her very heart bursting with pure affection, she flung her arms owre my shouthers, and said—"I will, John!"

Oh! of all the words that ever a human being heard, nothing could match the music of those three words to me. It was sweeter than the harp of a fairy soughing owre a moonlight sea, when the winds of heaven are sleeping.

"Oh, bless ye! bless ye!—for ever bless ye!" cried I—"Katie, ye hae made me the happiest man in a' Peebles an' I trust I shall mak ye the happiest wife."

I absolutely danced wi' joy, and clapped my hands aboon my head. If ever there was a man intoxicated wi' joy, it was me that night; and I am certain that her joy was nothing less than mine, though she did not express it so extravagantly.

Neither the one nor the other of us heard the town clock chap nine. Three hours flew owre our heads as if they hadna been three minutes. I set her to her faither's door, and just as she was putting her hand upon the sneck—"Eh, John!" whispered she, "where can I hae left my hook?"

"That's weel minded," said I; "I remember I took it off yer shouther, an' put it owre the yett, when I was takin' the prickles oot o' yer finger."

Ye may think of what baith of us had been thinking about, when neither of us missed the hook, or remembered leaving it till that moment. We went to seek it, with her arm through mine, (and close to my side I pressed it,) and there, accordingly, did we find the hook upon the yett where I had placed it.

She was rather feared to gang into the house, on account of her being out so late, for her faither and mother were strict sort o' folk. Therefore, I volunteered to go in wi' her, and explain at once how matters stood. For, bashful as I was before telling my mind to her, I had broken the ice now, and was as bold as brass.

She hesitated for some time; but I urged the thing, and she consented, and into her faither's I went wi' her. I wasna long in making the auld man acquainted wi' the nature of my visit, and frankly asked him, if he had ony sort of objection to taking me for a son-in-law.

"I watna," said he, "but I daresay no. I dinna see ony reasonable objection that I ought to hae. What do ye say, Tibbie?" added he to his wife,

"Me!" added she; "what would ye hae me to say? Johnny is a decent lad and a guid tradesman; and if he likes Katie, and Katie likes him, I dinna see that you or I can do onything in the matter, but just leave it to their twa sells."

"Weel, John," said her faither to me, "as Tibbie says, I suppose it will just have to rest between yourscls. If ye are baith agreeable, we are agreeable."

I wonder I didna jump through the roof of the house. Joy almost deprived me of my specific gravity. Never, since I was born, had I experienced such sensations of ecstasy before.

Now, this was what I call my first real sunny day. It was a day of memorable joy—and joy, too, of a particular description, and which a man can feel but once in the course of his existence.

I can say, without vanity, that I had always been a saving lad, and, therefore, in the course of two or three weeks, I took a house, which I furnished very respectably. And my second sunny day, was that on which Katie, and her faither, and her mother, and a lass that was an intimate acquaintance of hers, came a' to my new house together—Katie never to leave it again—for the minister just came in after them. Oh! when I heard the minister pronounce us *one*, and gie us his benediction as man and wife—and, aboon all, when I thought that she was now *mine*—*mine* for ever—that nothing upon earth could separate us—I almost wondered that poor sinful mortals such as we are, should be permitted to enjoy such unspeakable happiness on this side of time. The very tears stood in my eyes wi' perfect ecstasy, and I could not forbear, before the minister and them a', of squeezing her hand, and saying—"My *ain* Katie!"

It was October, but a very mild day, and a very sunny day—indeed it might, in all respects, have passed for a day in August. After dinner, the room became rather warm, and the window was drawn down from the top. There was a lark singing its autumn song right aboon the house, and its loud sweet notes came pouring in by the window.

"Poor thing," thought I, "your joys are ending, and mine are only beginning; but I trust, in the autumn of my days, to sing as blithely as ye do now."

I gied another glance at my ain Katie, and as I contemplated her lovely countenance, I felt as a man that was never to know sorrow; for I didna see how it was possible for sorrow to be where such angel sweetness existed.

That was my second sunny day; and my third followed after it in the natural course of time; for the event that rendered it memorable was neither more nor less than the birth of my first born—my only son. I was walking out in the fields when the tidings were brought to me; and when I found that I had cause to offer thanks for a living mother and a living child, wi' perfect joy the tears ran down my cheeks. I silently prayed for my Katie and for "*my bairn.*" When I thought that a man-son was born unto me, and that I was indeed a faither, the pride and the joy of my heart were almost too great for me to bear. I would not have exchanged the natural and honourable title of *faither*, to have been made Emperor of Russia and King of Madagascar.

It was a glorious day in the height of summer, and as I hurried home to see, to kiss, my bairn and its mother, I believe the very flowers by the roadside were conscious that it was a *faither*, a *new-made faither*, that trampled on them, I did it so quickly and so lightly. But great as my joy then was, it was nothing to be compared with what I felt when I saw my Katie and our bairn, and when my lips touched theirs. O man! I then did feel the full, the overflowing ecstasy of a faither's heart. Never shall I forget it. That was the third of my five sunny days.

The fourth was of a different description, but gied me unmingled satisfaction, and perhaps I may say, was in some sort the foundation of the one which succeeded.

Now, I must make you sensible that Katie made a very notable wife. In her household affairs, she set an example that was worthy of imitation by every wife in Peebles. There was naething wasted in her house, and the shadow of onything extravagant was never seen.

One night, about six weeks after our marriage, she and I were sitting at the fireside, by our two sells, (for we never made our house a howff for neighbours and their clashes,) when she said to me very seriously—"John, I've often heard it said, that the first hundred pounds is worse to make than the next five hundred. Do ye no think it possible for you and me to save a hundred?"

"I watna, my dear," said I; "though I say it myself, there are none belonging to the craft that can make better wages than I can, and if it is your desire to make the endeavour—wi' all my heart, say I."

So the thing was agreed upon, and we set about it the very next day. I got a strong wooden box made, wi' a hole on the top, just about long enough and broad enough to let in a penny-piece edgeways; and I caused a bit leather, like a tongue, to be nailed owre the inside of the hole, so that whatever was put in, coudna be taken out again till the box was broken open.

For many a day, both her and me wrought hard, both late and early, to accomplish it. We neither allowed the back to gang bare or shabby, nor did we scrimp our coggie, during our endeavours; but we avoided every sixpence, every farthing of unnecessary expense.

At length Katie says to me one day, just after denner-time—"John, I daresay we will have the hundred pounds now. If ye have nae objection we will open the box and see."

It was the very thing which I had been wishing her to propose for months; and up I banged upon the kist, and put my hand on the head of the bed, where the box was kept. It was terrible heavy, and it required both my hands to lift it down.

I forced up the lid, and having locked the door, I placed the box upon the table. The sun was streaming in at the window sae bright that ye would have said it was aware of the satisfaction of Katie and mysel', as we saw it streaming upon the heap of treasure which our own industry had gathered together. It took us from two in the afternoon until six at night to count it; for it consisted of gold, silver, and copper; and we counted it thrice over, before we made it come twice to the same sum. At last we were satisfied that it amounted to one hundred and fifteen pounds, seven shillings and eightpence half-penny.

When I ascertained that the object of my desire, and of my late and early savings, was accomplished, I was that happy that I almost knocked owre the table where it was all spread out, counted into parcels of twenty shillings. I threw my arms round Katie, wi' as meikle rapture as I did on my first sunny day, when she said—"I will, John;" for the object was of her proposing, and she had the entire merit of the transaction. It was a grand sight to see the sinking sun throwing the shadow of the hundred and odd twenty-shilling towers across the table, and to the far side of the floor. Folk talk of the beauty of rainbows, but there never was a rainbow to be compared wi' the appearance of our floor that evening, wi' a' the shadows of the piles of siller running across it. That was my fourth sunny day.

Finding that I was now a man of capital, I took a shop in the front street, and commenced business as a maister boot and shoe-maker. Katie was remarkably civil in the shop, and I always tried to put good stuff into the hands of customers, so that in a very short time I carried on a very prosperous concern. I also rose very high in the opinion of my fellow-craftsmen; and, wonderful to relate! I heard that it was their determination to elect me to the high and honourable office of deacon of the corporation of our ancient and respectable trade, in the ancient burgh of Peebles.

This was a height to which my ambition never could have aspired, and when I heard of the intention of the brethren, it really made me that I couldna sleep. It made me not only dream that I was a deacon, but a king, a prince, a

bashaw—a dear kens what—but anything but plain John Brotherton. I thought it was a hoax that some of the craft were wishing to play off on me; therefore, I spoke of the subject with great caution. But when it was put into my head, there was nothing on the earth that I so much desired. I thought what an honour it would be, when I was dead and gone, for my son to be able to say—"My father was deacon of the ancient company of cordwainers in Peebles!"

"What a sound that will have!" thought I. On the morning of the election I awoke fearing, believing, hoping, trembling. I could hardly put on my clothes. However, the choosing of office-bearers began, and I was declared duly elected deacon of the company of cordwainers. It was with difficulty that I refrained from clapping my hands in the court, and I am positive I would not have been able to do it, had it not been that the brethren came crowding round me to shake hands wi' me.

I went home in very high glee, as ye may well suppose, and Katie met me wi' great joy in her looks. When the supper was set upon the table—"Katie, my dear," said I, "send out for a bottle of strong ale."

"A bottle of strong ale, John!" quoth she, in surprise; "remember that though ye hae been appointed deacon o' the shoemakers ye are but a mortal man! Remember, John, that it was by drinking wholesome water, wi' pickles of oatmeal in it, that enabled you to save a hundred pounds, and so to become deacon of the trade. But had ye sent for bottles of strong ale to your supper, ye would neither have saved the one, nor been made the other. Na, na, John, think nae mair about ale."

"Weel, weel," said I, "ye are right, Katie—I canna deny it."

That was what I call my fifth sunny day—a remarkable day in my existence, standing out from amongst the rest, and crowned wi' happiness.

THE HERMIT OF THE HILLS.

"INTRUDER, thou shalt hear my tale," the solitary said;
While far adown beneath our feet the fiery levin played;
The thunder-clouds our carpet were—we gazed upon the storm,
Which swept along the mountain sides, in many a fearful form.

I sat beside the lonely man. on Cheviot's cloudless height;
Above our heads was glory, but beneath more glorious night;
For the sun was shining over us, but lightnings flashed below,
Like the felt and burning darkness of unutterable wo.

"I love, in such a place as this," the desolate began,
"To gaze upon the tempests wild that sep'rate me from man;—
To muse upon the passing things that agitate the world—
View myself as by a whirlwind to hopeless ruin hurled.

"My heart was avaricious once, like yours the slave of feeling—
Perish such hearts!—vile dens of crime! man's selfishness concealing;—
For self! damned self's creation's lord!—man's idol and his god!
Twas torn from me, a blasted, bruised, a cast off, worthless load.

"Some say there's wildness in my eyes, and others deem me crazed,
They, trembling, turn and shun my path—for which let Heaven be praised!
They say my words are blasphemy—they marvel at my fate,
When 'tis my happiness to know, they *pity* not, but—*hate*.

"My father fell from peace and wealth the day that I was born—
My mother died, and he became his fellow-gamblers scorn;
I know not where he lived or died—I never heard his name—
An orphan in a workhouse—I was thought a child of shame.

"Some *friend* by blood had lodged me there, and bought my keeper too,
Who pledged his oath he would conceal what of my tale he knew.
Death came to him; he called on me the secret to unfold;
But died while he was uttering the little I have told.

"My soul was proud, nor brooked restraint—was proud, and I was young;
And with an eager joyancy, I heard his faltering tongue
Proclaim me not of beggars born; yea, as he speaking died,
I—greedy—mad to know the rest—stood cursing by his side.

"I looked upon the homely garb that told my dwelling-place—
It hung upon me heavily—a token of disgrace!
I fled the house—I went to sea—was by a wretch impressed,
The stamp of whose brutality is printed on my breast.

"Like vilest slave he fettered me, my flesh the irons tore—
Scourged, mocked, and worse than buried me upon a lifeless shore
Where human foot had never trode—upon a barren rock,
Whose caves ne'er echoed to a sound, save billows as they broke.

"'Twas midnight—but the morning came. I looked upon the sea,
And a melancholy wilderness its waters were to me;
The heavens were black as yonder cloud that rolls beneath our feet,
While neither land nor living thing my eager eyes could meet.

"I naked sat upon the rock;—I trembled—strove to pray;—
Thrice did I see a distant sail, and thrice they bore away.
My brain with hunger maddening, as the steed the battle braves,
Headlong I plunged from the bare rock and buffeted the waves.

"Methought I saw a vessel near, and bitter were my screams;
But they died within me echoless as voices in our dreams;
For the winds were howling round me, and the suffocating gush
Of briny horrors rioted, the cry of death to crush.

"My senses fled. I lifelessly upon the ocean slept;
And when to consciousness I woke, a form before me wept.

Her face was beautiful as light!—but by her side there stood
A group, whose savage glances were more dismal than the flood.

"They stood around exultingly;—they snatched me from the wave—
Stole me from death—to torture me, to sell me as a slave.
She who stood o'er me weeping was a partner of my chains.
We were sold, and separation bled my heart with deeper pains.

"I knew not what her birth had been, but loved her with a love
Which nor our tyrant's cruelty nor mockery could move.
I saw her offered to a Moor—another purchased me—
But, heavens! my arms once fetterless, ere midnight I was free!

"Memory, with eager eye, had marked her master's hated door—
I grasped a sabre—reached the house, and slew th' opposing Moor.
I bore her rapidly away;—a boat was on the beach—
We put to sea—saw morning dawn 'yond our pursuer's reach.

"I gazed upon her silently—I saw her sink to sleep,
As darkness gathered over us upon the cheerless deep;—
I saw her in her slumber start—unconsciously she spoke—
O death!—she called upon *his* name who left me on the rock!

"Then! there was madness in my breast and fury in my brain—
She never heard *that name* from me—yet uttered it again!
I started forth and grasped her hand—"Are we pursued?" she cried—
I trembled in my agony, and speechless o'er her sighed.

"I ventured not to speak of love in such an awful hour,
For hunger glistened in our eyes, and grated to devour
The very rags that covered us!—My pangs I cannot tell,
But in that little hour I felt the eternity of hell!

"For the transport of its tortures did in that hour surround
Two beings on the bosom of a shoreless ocean found;
As we gazed upon each other, with a dismal longing look,
And jealousy, but not from love, our tortured bosoms shook.

"I need but add that we were saved, and by a vessel borne
Again toward our native land, to be asunder torn.
The maiden of my love was rich—was rich—and I was poor—
A soulless menial shut on me her wealthy guardian's door.

"She knew it not, nor would I tell—tell! by the host of heaven,
My tongue became the sepulchre of sound!—my heart was riven.
I fled society and hope; the prison of my mind
A world of inexpressible and guilty thoughts confined.

She was not wed—my hope returned; ambition fired my soul,
Sweeping round me like a fury; while the beacon and the goal
Of desire ever turbulent and sleepless, was to have
The hand that mine had rescued from the fetters of a slave.

"I was an outcast on the earth, but braved my hapless lot;
And while I groaned impatiently, weak mortals heard it not.
A host of drear, unholy dreams did round my pillow haunt;
While my days spent in loneliness, were darkened o'er with want.

"At length blind fortune favoured me—my breast to joy awoke;
And then he who had left me on the isolated rock,
I met within a distant land; nor need I farther tell,
But, that we *met* as equals there, and my antag'nist fell.

"Awhile I brooded on his death; and gloomily it brought
A desolateness round me, stamping guilt on every thought.
I trembling found how bloodily my vengeance was appeased,
At what vile price my bosom was of *jealousy* released.

"For still the breathing of his name by her I lov'd, had rung,
In remembrance, like the latest sound that falleth from the tongue
Of those best loved and cherished, when upon the bed of death
They bequeath to us their injuries to visit in our wrath.

"But soon these griefs evanished, like a passing summer storm,
And a gush of hope like sunshine flashed around me, to deform
The image of repentance, while the darkness of remorse
Retreated from its presence with a blacker with'ring curse.

"I hurried home in eagerness;—the leaden moments fled;—
My burning tale of love was told—was told, and we were wed.
A tumult of delightfulness had rapt my soul in flame,
But on that day—my wedding day—a mourning letter came.

"Joy died on ev'ry countenance—she, trembling, broke the seal—
Screamed—glanced on me! and lifeless fell, unable to reveal
The horrid tale of death that told her new-made husband's guilt—
The hand which she that day had wed—her brother's blood had spilt.

"That brother in his mother's right another name did bear—
'Twas him I slew;—all shrank from me in horror and in fear;—
They seized me in my bridal dress—my bride still senseless lay—
I spoke not while they pinioned me and hurried me away

"They lodged me in a criminal cell, by iron gratings barred,
And there the third day heavily a funeral bell I heard.
A sable crowd my prison passed—they gazed on it with gloom—
It was my bride—my beautiful, they followed to the tomb!

"I was acquitted—but what more had I with life to do?—
I cursed my fate—my heart—the world—and from its creatures flew.
Intruder, thou hast heard my tale of wretchedness and guilt—
Go, mingle with a viler world, and tell it if thou wilt."

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER I.

Lives there a man who calls his heart his own,
Can look on ripening beauty's breathing eye—
The breast of snow—love's altar, and its throne—
The lips round which sweet smiles and graces fly—
The more than sculptured elegance—the tone
Of loveliness and health, whose vermil dye
Is with the early lily blent, on cheeks
Whose very blush of love and conquest speaks.

Say, is there one on these can fondly gaze,
Nor feel his heart turn rebel to his will;
Till all that charmed is changed—the voice of praise—
The smile of friends—his haunts, by wood or hill—
The sports, the joys, the all of early days—
Have lost their music; and he gazeth still
Upon the fair enchantress—changer—all!
Till she, too, changed, shall on his bosom fall.

Burnpath was a small fishing village in the south of Scotland, of which, many years ago, a Mr Robertson was minister. He had a daughter of great beauty, whose name was Mary. It was October, and there had been a wreck upon the coast during the night. By daybreak, old and young were upon the beach. Amongst them was Mary Robertson. She came upon the seeming lifeless body of a youth, who, by his dress, appeared to be an officer. She bent over him. She fancied there was still warmth at his heart. She called for help, and bearing him to her father's house, within an hour animation was restored.

On the following morning, Mr Robertson led into the breakfast parlour, a noble-looking young midshipman. Youthful enthusiasm, sadness, and gratitude, appeared blended on his features. His eyes were of a deep and piercing black; at first sight, almost unpleasantly so, seeming to search the very thoughts of those on whom he looked. But his countenance was animated and expressive; and his bright brown hair fell carelessly, in thick natural curls, over a broad and open brow. His stature somewhat exceeded the middle size; and his person, though not inelegant, was rather robust than handsome; while his age could not exceed five and twenty. Mutual congratulations were exchanged; and he had been seated but a few minutes, when Mary placed a small pocket Bible in his hands. He glanced at her for a moment, almost unmeaningly; and opened it with a look of perplexed curiosity. When the Psalm commenced, he seemed surprised and startled at the affinity it and the chapter which was read by Mary bore to his own situation. He appeared puzzled, confounded, interested; and, when they knelt in prayer, he looked round in embarrassment, as one who wist not what to do. He was evidently a stranger to such things. Of the prayer, he knew not what to think. He was at once pleased, overpowered, and offended.

"It may be all very good," said he to himself; "but it is scarce civil to call a gentleman a sinner to his face! He is very anxious about my spiritual state to-day, but my body might have perished for him yesterday, had not that glorious creature exerted herself."

While he thus thought, he gazed obliquely on her kneeling form, his head resting on his hand, with his face turned toward the chair where she knelt, till his gaze became rivetted—his thoughts absorbed; and, as she, with her father, rose, he started to his feet, and, almost unconscious of what had passed, looked round in ill-disguised bewilderment.

Leaving him, however, to overcome his confusion, we shall introduce our readers to what we know of his family.

Henry Walton—for so, in future, we shall designate him—was the only son of Sir Robert Walton, in the county of Devon. Sir Robert was proud of his son, and loved him second only to his bottle, his chestnut hunter, and his hounds, or, rather, he loved them less, but thought of them more.

"Bravo! Hal is father's better," said he; "there goes a chip of the old block!" as Henry cleared a five-barred gate, or brought down a pigeon on the wing with a bullet. Not that he would have risen a shade in the esteem of the Baronet, had he carried in his head the wisdom of Greece and the eloquence of Rome. All oratory was alike to him, save the "sound of the bugle horn." Henry, however, had other qualifications, which were a theme of continued praise with his father. He was a keen sportsman—a dead shot; and, when but nineteen, disguised as a countryman, he had attended the annual "revel" at Ashburton, where his father presided as umpire, and was to bestow five guineas, from his own purse, on the victor wrestler. Having inserted a fictitious name upon the lists, he entered the ring, and alternately threw his three brawny opponents two fair back-falls each, amidst the deafening shouts of all the strong men in Devonshire. He now approached, hanging his head, toward his father, to receive the extended reward.

"Swinge! look up, man!" vociferated Sir Robert in the excess of his admiration, accompanying the request with a hearty slap on the shoulder; "Swinge! I say, look up, man, for thou'st a good un!"

Henry bowed, and, without speaking, retired with the purse; and, to increase the astonishment of the spectators divided its contents among the three chopfallen and, in truth, not over-pleasant-looking antagonists he had vanquished. At this act of generosity, the Devonians shouted and bellowed forth their lusty and reiterated applause, as if determined to shake down the sun from the heavens, to crown the brows of the conqueror. Sir Robert shouted louder than the loudest—rushed into the ring—grasped the hand of the victor, and shook it with an honest enthusiasm that would have relieved a more delicate hand from the future trouble of wearing fingers.

"Faith, and dang it!" said he, "and thou art a good un. Now, for that same, instead of five guineas, here are ten for thee. But, why, man, look up, and let us see thy face, and pull off thy night-cap."

So saying, he without ceremony unfastened a napkin Henry had bound around his head, to aid his concealment.

"Swinge! what!" shouted Sir Robert—"my own son! my own Hal! father's better!—O Lord! O Lord!"

He danced in the extreme of ecstasy, and hugged him furiously to his heart, till he who had overthrown three, fell beneath the muscular embrace of his father.

Henry's grandfather, after living forty years in the unnatural and unsocial state by some called single blessedness, and remaining proof against the shafts of blind gods and bright-eyed divinities, found his philosophy disturbed by the

laughing face, the exquisite neck, and the well-rounded arm of a pretty haymaker, who was a parish apprentice to one of his own tenants. Blue eyes, auburn locks, and a waist symmetry itself, (for it, too, had arrested the admiration of the bachelor,) are not to be trifled with in a hay-field, in a glowing day in June, when the melting fragrance smells to heaven, the lark pours down the full tide of melody and affection over the nest of his delighted and listening mate, and the very butterflies pursue each other, flutter, shake their downy wings, and wanton love in the dreamy air! If a bachelor will go abroad on such a day, he should lock up his heart in his writing-desk. But our old baronet, never having made the discovery that he was in possession of one, overlooked this precaution—

"Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
Sighed and looked, and sighed again;"

till the whole group of curtsying haymakers burst into a titter at the confusion of his Honour. He shortly found means to declare his passion, though it is true he never dreamed of marriage: but the fair maiden dreamed of nothing else; and, to the astonishment of her wealthy lover, would hear of nothing else. Therefore, Susan Prescott became Lady Walton, and, in due time, the mother of Sir Robert.

Within two years after their marriage, the Baronet dropped from his chair, while drawing the cork of his third bottle, in a fit—which Lady Walton could not remember the name of! She wept, like a dutiful widow, over her husband; who, having a constitutional terror of the thought of death, (though by no means a coward,) had ever banished every thing that tended to remind him of mortality; and thereby dying without a will, left the future guardianship and education of Sir Robert to his mother. She had, indeed, had fifty tutors, as she said, superintending the studies of the young heir of the Priory; for none staid beyond a month, and she assured them—"She would allow no such hungry nothings to contradict her Bobby, who was a good scholar and mother's darling."

For the little, therefore, that Sir Robert did know, he was more indebted to natural quickness, and the occasional lessons of the vicar, who forced them upon him in defiance of his mother's displeasure, than to his fifty tutors.

On the year after his coming of age, in despite of the tears and upbraidings of Lady Walton, Sir Robert ordered his travelling carriage, his double-barrelled fowlingpieces, and all the *et ceteras* of a sporting campaign; and left the "garden and watering-place of England," (as its inhabitants call it, and with some cause,) for a shooting excursion on the moors of Scotland. Against this journey his mother wept, prayed, and protested; but her tears, her entreaties, and protestations, were lost upon her son; who, after seeing his pack properly *packed* up, sprang into his carriage, whistling

"Over the hills and far awa,"

with a suddenness and a weight that made the wheels creak and the horses stagger; while her Ladyship kept thrusting beneath his feet bundles of stockings, flannels, and dreadnoughts, sufficient for a Greenland voyage, or a North West passage—"Quite certain," as she said, poor soul, and sobbing as she said it, while she scrambled up to the carriage for another parting kiss, "that her dear Bobby would be frozen to death, that he would, in that cold outlandish country! But they could expect no better who would not take a mother's advice."

"Good-by, mother!" cried Sir Robert. Crack went the whip—whir went the wheels—the horses tossed their heads—the hounds raised a farewell note—and away went the baronet, with a sound heart and light, to the hills of "bonny Scotland."

The shooting season had but commenced. Sir Robert had been but a few days in the Highlands, when he became acquainted with a brother sportsman. Major Cameron was a hardy, weather-beaten veteran, who had only his half-pay to live upon, with his honest scars, and the blood of Lochiels in his veins, to boast of. He had been distinguished as a fearless and able officer, was possessed of considerable shrewdness, and his knowledge, if not deep, was general. He had had a dream of ambition in his youth, but a Majority, with permission to retire upon half-pay—and, more than these, the death of a beloved wife, with the education and care of an only daughter—dispelled the enchantment. He now rented a beautiful cottage, and a few surrounding acres, in the neighbourhood of Inverness.

Shortly after their acquaintance, the Major—though certainly not struck with the attainments of the young baronet, yet pleased with his constant good humour, his love of sport, and, perhaps, (but we can't tell,) not overlooking his fortune and his own daughter—invited him to his house. The simple elegance of Miss Cameron's household startled Sir Robert. She, too, stood before him in all the glory of young womanhood. To say that she was beautiful, is to say the least that we could say. Her person was tall, graceful, and commanding; and her mind adorned, not merely with ornamental, but domestic accomplishments. It is true her father, though a good soldier, a good citizen, and an indulgent parent, had no fixed or guiding principle of religion. He believed himself a Christian; but he was one of those who do not make their religion the rule of their life; and under such a teacher, while she received a high sense of honour and a pure morality; her religion, like that of many others, consisted in attending the church, and finished with the service.

To think of a warm-hearted, unsophisticated young fellow, like Sir Robert, holding out against the artillery of her eyes for a week, were as impossible as to suspend the earth from a packthread! He looked—that is to say, he looked as stupid—as people generally do when the eyes have to perform the office of the tongue. Within a fortnight, the young sportsman bade good-by to the moors. His game lay in the Major's cottage. His blood rose to a fever heat without Lady Walton's flannels. Twenty times in the twenty-four hours he sighed, looked in her face, and said, "Miss Cameron!" looked to the ground again, and said no more. And when, at length, the Major railed him on letting the shooting season slip—"Why, dang it, d'ye see, Major," said he, "I came here to shoot, and I've got shot myself! So, if thou art my friend, now or never ask Miss Cameron."

The Major had already reasoned that he must die and leave his daughter unprovided for, and an orphan. The thought cut him to the heart. It had often cost him tears. The baronet was rather ignorant, but he was good-natured. It was evident he loved his daughter—she might instruct him. He was rich; he had influence—the Major might yet obtain a regiment!

"Yes, yes," said the veteran to himself, "she *must*—Jess *shall* marry the Englishman."

Miss Jess Cameron was sufficiently aware of the state o her lover's heart, not to be surprised by her father's announcement of his wishes; and, having weighed the matter much in the same manner, with the aditional reflection that Sir Robert was a handsome fellow—though rather huge withal—she blushed a soft consent; and the marriage articles being agreed to, signed, and sealed, before brown October had run its course, the travelling carriage containing Sir Robert, his lady, and father-in-law, was again on its way to Buckham Priory.

On their arrival, the then dowager Lady Walton grew pale—then all the hues of the rainbow—and finally settled into a bursting red.

"Lady Walton!—Lady Walton, indeed!" she repeated, and wrung her hands; till "Lady Walton!" was heard in every room of the Priory.

"Two Lady Waltons in one house!" she again cried, and flew to her bottle for consolation. Cider had been her favourite beverage; but, continuing to mix it too strongly with brandy, in a few years after this proof of her son's disobedience, the good lady went out of this world with nearly as little ceremony as her dear deceased husband.

Previous to his being sent to the university, Henry's studies were anxiously directed by his excellent mother and grandfather; while his father took upon him the guidance of his bodily exercises. He had now been about four years in the navy. Sir Robert swore, "Hal was not father's son, in making choice of such a profession." His mother would rather he had chosen the army, while his grandfather sighed and wondered at his taste. Such, at this period of our story, were the inhabitants of the Priory; whom having introduced to our readers, we proceed with our narrative.

Return we now to the Manse. Burnpath was a beautiful, though irregular little village, lying, perhaps, a quarter of a mile (we cannot speak to a measured certainty) from the sea. The long, bleak, dark ridge of Lammermuir smiled into fertility, as its eastern boundary descended towards the kirk. A young forest of pines spread proudly over the surrounding hills. A wimpling burn, which, at times, assumed the airs of a cataract, ran in manifold and antic windings through a steep ravine, or rather chasm, in the mountains that stretched back into the desert. The brook imitated, as it neared the sea, the importance of a river, and separated the Manse from the village. A wooden deal, resting on the opposite banks, served as a bridge during a flood; and, in summer, four large stones, about three feet apart, answered all the purposes of a ferry.

We have already said the Manse looked to the sea. It was a dark, dingy-looking house—old, black, and solid; with deep, narrow, castellated windows; and huge, massy chimneys, rising, like staircases, from its foundations, on the outside of each gable. It was surrounded by a clump of oaks, and thin, dry, aged firs, the extremities of which had forgotten the seasons. Several were broken and branchless, and two uprooted by the late storm. The tombs joined with a corner of the building. The owl already shrieked on the eaves for its midnight meal; and the daw perched on the roof of the anticipated ruin. The bat wheeled around it undisturbed; and the villagers, though accustomed to its gloom, felt loneliness creep through their flesh as they approached it after twilight. The house had no evil name; but situation is everything, (as landlords say,) and the Manse had an evil situation.

The picture, however, had two lights. Before it, lay a sloping garden, disposed and pruned by the hand of taste; and from its highest elevation, its shadow was seen sleeping in the deeps of the quiet sea. Around it spread the purple hills; and, with the breeze that swept down their heathery sides, bearing health upon its bosom, mingled the notes of the shepherd's flute and the bleating of his flocks. There, too, amidst the young pines, the wild-dove welcomed the spring, the lark filled the air with music, and the linnet trilled its artless note from the yellow whins. Within, the fire of comfort blazed, and the eye of affection beamed. Such was the village of Burnpath, and its Manse.

Mr Robertson felt, for Henry, a feeling of admiration and pity. He admired his ardent and enthusiastic spirit—he pitied its recklessness. He admired the fervid brilliancy of his imagination—he lamented its objects. He admired the warmth and intensity of his feelings, the extent of his knowledge, and the clearness of his understanding—while, to use his own words, he pitied his ignorance of the knowledge which alone maketh rich unto salvation. These sentiments, with a pious and an anxious wish that he might be instrumental in awakening within him a concern for his future welfare, induced him to solicit Henry to remain for several weeks beneath his hospitable roof. The invitation was accepted, with a rapture that might have betrayed other feelings than gratitude; but this Mr Robertson attributed to the warmth of his young friend's disposition.

Mary, too, heard the proposal made and accepted, with a delight which she strove not to disguise. Melancholy passed from her brow, a smile played upon her cheeks, and a tear—no, it could not be called a tear—it was a drop of joy—of——but no matter. Henry was by her side—he had taken her hand—she offered not to withdraw it. He said nothing—there was no need to say anything. It was mere congratulation at the prospect of his remaining a few weeks longer. Mary thought *that* was her meaning; *it* was, doubtless, Henry's also; and her father thought so, too.

About twelve weeks had passed. Henry felt exquisitely happy. Mr Robertson's prayers had become quite delightful; for then he could take long deep draughts of——he scarce knew what—on the lovely form that knelt by his side; save when she, too, stole a sidelong glance, and their eyes met—were withdrawn—and both blushed—blushed, it may be, at their want of devotion. Nevertheless, Henry was happy; Mary was happy, too. Happiness is contagious: her father grew cheerful and jocular. He was convinced Henry was becoming religious.

CHAPTER II.

The morning stars were twinkling still,
The cock but thrice did craw,
When our guid laird rode owre the hill,
In weddin suit sae braw.

And aye he clapped his ain brown mare,
That she her feet micht ply;
And aye he crooned a canty air—
"A happy man am I."

"Oh! a happy man am I," quo' he,
"As e'er was blest or born!"
And owre the hill he rode in glee,
Upon his weddin morn.

Now ane by ane the stars gaed out,
And birds began to sing;
And a' the air became a shout
Of music on the wing.

His cheek was flushed, but it grew pale
Before the stars returned,
And music was a maniac's wail
Where desolation mourned.

For vainly whimpered he a catch,
And vainly did he ride—
'Twas but to see another snatch
Away his bonny bride!

It had been long understood that the lovely Mary Robertson was to become the wife of a rich bachelor, of ripe middle age, named Mr Cuthbertson. Their wedding-day, indeed, had been long fixed by her father and wooer, and its eve had arrived. But, on that day, she secretly gave her hand to Henry Walton.

On the evening preceding the day appointed for his marriage, Mr Cuthbertson came smiling through Burnpath, patting the shaggy neck of his companion. He appeared to sit lighter on his saddle than usual; and the glad creature, either participating in his joy, or grateful for the termination of its journey, ambled and affected all the importance of a

"Courser of the Ukraine breed."

The rider had laid aside his fashionable blacks. Stopping in the passage, and casting off what was rather a warm than

a fashionable roquelaire, he displayed a coat of superfine Saxony blue; which, upon a body of better proportions, would, in those days, have purchased immortality for the most fashionable sneidier in Bond Street. Beneath, appeared a waistcoat white as the driven snow, adorned with ornamental mother-of-pearls, and unbuttoning his overalls, a pair of

"Lean and slippered pantaloons"

were discovered, of the same consistency and hue as his coat. Thus prepared, after smoothing back his hair from his forehead, and adjusting his cravat, the joyous bridegroom made one stride to the parlour-door

We know not how our unfortunate progenitor looked in Paradise, when questioned—"Adam, what hast thou done?" but, certainly, not less horror-stricken was our well-dressed lover, when his next step brought him in front of his lovely bride; with her arms thrown around the neck, and her face, bathed in tears, buried in the bosom of Henry Walton. His mouth opened to its utmost width. His large eyes became still larger; they strained forward from their sockets, ready to leap on the devoted pair. His clenched hands were raised, and in contact with the roof. The shaking began in his heart, and his knees caught the contagion. Every joint appeared under the power of electricity, and communicated its influence to the furniture in the room. The quivering vibrations of his whole person resembled a wire suspended from the ceiling, and struck by an instrument, which gave forth one sepulchral sound; and, with a loud, deep groan, his tall figure fell insensible on the floor.

Mary groaned also, and endeavoured to raise him, but could not. Henry sprang to his assistance, and lifting him from the ground, placed him upon the sofa. For a time, his bones seemed melted, and his joints out of their place. At length his eyes began to roll—his teeth grated together—he threw out his two clenched hands furiously—tore open his spotless vest, and rending it in frenzy, the unfortunate mother-of-pearls followed the fragment, and were driven across the room. The destruction of his costly *Marseilles* recalled a portion of his scattered senses: he gave a piteous glance at his breast, to see the rend "his envious fingers made;" then turning his eyes upon Henry, who still bent over him, he uttered a loud yell; thrust his fingers in the throat of his rival, as a tiger springs upon its prey; and, in a moment, darted to his feet. Cuthbertson was, at no time, deficient in physical strength; and now, aided by frenzy, his grasp was the dying gripe of a giant. Henry, who was unprepared for the attack, became black in the strangling hold of his antagonist. Mary, recalled to a consciousness of her situation by the conflict, screamed for assistance, supplicated and threatened, but in vain. At that moment, her father returned from Edinburgh. So soon as his astonishment admitted of words, he mingled his inquiries, entreaties, and threats, with his daughter's. Cuthbertson's eyes gloated with indignation; his teeth gnashed; he uttered short, thick screams, and his fingers yet clung to the throat of his opponent. Henry, however, who, though less in stature, inherited the gigantic strength of his father, and the skill of a wrestler, threw his arms around his man, fixed his knuckles into the most susceptible part of his back, and raising his foot to his knee, hurled him to the earth, with a violence that seemed to shake the very walls of the Manse.

In a moment, Cuthbertson was again upon his feet, "weeping, wailing, and gnashing his teeth." Henry stood by Mary's side.

"Mary," said her father, "tell me the cause of this unseemly scene—that, on my return, instead of the sounds of joy and rejoicing, I hear wrath and profane language, and, behold, my best friends tear each other as wild beasts!"

Mary was silent; she glanced at Henry and clung to his side for protection.

"O sir! sir!" exclaimed Mr Cuthbertson—"we are ruined—lost—undone! The villain!—the monster!—the seducer!—has torn from me the pride o' my heart, and the delight o' my een! He has turned the house o' joy into shame, and the bridal sang to lamentation! O Mr Robertson! what's to be dune noo? Mary, Mary, woman! wha wad hae thocht this o' you?"

Mr Robertson's blood chilled in his veins; his flesh grew cold upon his bones; an icy sweat burst from his forehead; anger and sorrow kindled in his face. He looked upon his daughter with a blighting frown. It was the first she had ever seen upon his mild features. His tongue faltered; he said, "Mary!" as if an accusing spirit from the grave had spoken it; and the frown blackened on his countenance. She heard her name as she had never before heard it from a parent's lips. She beheld his look of anguish and of scorn—the tear and the curse meeting in a father's heart for his own child! She uttered a self-accusing groan, and fell lifeless at his feet.

Janet Gray, the aged housekeeper, and who had been Mary's nurse, entered with the maid-servant, and carried her to her room. Her father turned with an upbraiding look toward Henry, and said—

"Mr Walton, as an injured man and a mourning parent, I demand from you the explanation of circumstances which, I fear, have brought dishonour upon my house and shame upon my grey hairs! Tell me—tell an agonized father—was your heart so void of mercy and of gratitude, as to ruin the bosom that saved you from destruction? Answer me, Henry Walton!—I conjure you as in the presence of your Maker—remove my fears, or seal my misery!"

"It is your own deed!" exclaimed Henry bitterly. "I loved your daughter. I would have fled from your house for ever. You—you withheld me! and my soul grew mad with love. I would still have fled, have buried me in the deep from which she snatched me; but I could not rule destiny. She loved me—*only* me. She is mine! Your daughter *cannot* wed that man."

Mr Robertson seemed smitten by a voice from heaven, he wrung his hands—threw himself back in despair, and wept.

"Canna marry me!" cried Mr Cuthbertson—"she *shall* marry me! And, on you, ye sacrilegious dyvour, I'll have satisfaction, if satisfaction can be had in the three kingdoms; for baith heaven and earth will rise up and battle upon my side!"

"Sir," said Henry, "in sympathy for your feelings, I forgive those epithets. If I have robbed you of her hand, I have not of her affections—they were never yours. But I will not withhold from you the satisfaction you demand; and, to-morrow, or this hour, I shall be ready to offer you such reparation as a gentleman may."

"Then," cried Mr Cuthbertson, who understood him literally, "renounce my bride for ever; and restore her to my heart—if a gentleman can do that—restore her spotless as a lily opening to the spring."

"Henry Walton," said Mr Robertson, rising with apparent composure, "you have rendered this a house of shame but it shall not be a house of blood. Such language may be fitting for the world, but not for the presence of a minister of peace. This moment leave my roof; and may Heaven change your heart, and forgive your ingratitude!"

Thus saying, he took his hand, and led him to the door. Henry offered not to resist or expostulate, and bending a proud farewell, the doors of Burnpath Manse closed on him for ever.

Mr Cuthbertson, now relieved of his rival's presence, took out his tobacco box, pulled a chair to the fire, ordered a pipe, threw his legs across each other, and commenced smoking with the utmost satisfaction and indifference; save that he occasionally bent an anxious gaze on the torn vest; and, look-

ing carefully round the room for the unlucky fragment, and its mother-of-pearl buttons, his eyes fell upon it, and lifting it from the floor, he commenced fitting it to the parent cloth, and, with perfect complacency, said—"Hoot, it will mend again. The seam, when the coat is buttoned, will never be noticed. Here, lassie," he cried to the servant who entered the room, "was ye ever at the sewing school?"

"Yes, sir," replied the girl.

"Weel, do ye think, ye could mak a job o' my waistcoat?" returned he. "If ye do it neatly, ye shall have half-a-crown, to yersel, besides the ribbons the morn. But haud awa, and see hoo your mistress is in the first place, and come and tell me."

On Henry's departure, Mr Robertson entered his daughter's room. She was lying delirious, calling for "her Henry, her husband, to save her!" Janet Gray sat by her side.

"Can it be thus, Janet?" said he. "Does she call him *husband?*"

Janet pointed to the ring upon Mary's finger, and was silent. Mr Robertson reeled back, and leaned his head against the window. The wind howled without, and the rain dashed upon the casements. He hastened down stairs, and entered the parlour as Mr Cuthbertson gave his last injunction to the maid.

"My friend," said he, "I have acted rashly in turning this young man from the house. I fear my daughter is, indeed—his—his wife!"

"His wife!" ejaculated Mr Cuthbertson—"his wife!"—The pipe fell from his mouth—the fragment of the waistcoat was cast in the fire. "His wife!" he exclaimed a third time, and stamped his foot upon the floor.

"Go," said Mr Robertson to the girl, "see if Mr Walton be yet in the village; and tell him that I beg he will instantly return. It is a dreadful night," continued he, addressing his forlorn friend, "and in putting him from my house, I have neither acted as a father, a man, nor a Christian."

"Oh! may darkness gather round his soul, and despair be the light of his heart!" cried Cuthbertson; "for he has made me miserable."

The maid returned, and stated that Mr Walton had not been seen.

"He will have taken to the moors," said Mr Robertson; "and, ignorant of the dangerous way, in the darkness of the night, his blood may be upon my head."

"Are ye mad? are ye daft?" said Mr Cuthbertson wildly; 'Mr Robertson! would you insult me in the midst of my bereavement? Would ye leave *me—me*, that ye've kenned for thirty years—to sorrow as one that has no hope?"

"Have not I also my sorrows?" replied Mr Robertson—"the sorrows of a father whose last spring of comfort is dried up? But let me not add sin to sorrow." And he hurried from the house.

"His wife! his wife!" muttered Mr Cuthbertson to himself. "Am I in my right senses? Am I mysel?—or is this a dream? Me that was to be married the morn? His wife!—Oh, mercy! mercy!—hoo lang am I to be the warld's laugh, and the warld's jeer!" And he crushed the broken pipe beneath his heel. "His wife!" he exclaimed, and rushing across the room, adding—

"Frailty, thy name is woman!"

CHAPTER III.

The sea is silent, and the winds of God
Stir not its waters; on its voiceless waves
Thick darkness presses as a mighty load,
Weighing their strength to slumber. O'er earth's graves
The lonely stars are dreaming; and the wind,
Benighted on the desert, howls to find
Its trackless path, as would a dying hound.
The thick clouds, wearied with their course all day,
Repose, like shrouded ghosts, on the black air;
Or in the darkness, having lost their way,
Await the dawn! 'Tis midnight reigns around—
Midnight, when crime and murder quit their lair;
Their footsteps, like their conscience—void of sound;
Their mission, blood—their recompense, despair!

Hour succeeded hour—midnight was past; Mr Cuthbertson still roamed disconsolate through the parlour, at times uttering a low, bitter sort of howl; and the wind howled still more disconsolately through the old firs: but Mr Robertson returned not. Mary had sunk into a slumber and Janet crept softly down stairs to inform her master.

"Is Mr Robertson not here, sir?" inquired she, addressing Mr Cuthbertson.

He looked at his watch. His own feelings were instantly swallowed up in anxiety for his friend.

"Preserve us!" he exclaimed—"it is one o'clock! and six hours since he gaed to the moors, after the author o' a' our sorrows! What can hae come owre him? Janet, haste ye, cry up the callant; fetch me my cloak; and we'll awa seek for him."

Janet hurried to execute his orders; and in a few minutes Mr Cuthbertson and the minister's boy left the house. For three hours they continued their fruitless search upon the moor. They were now near the cottage of an aged widow, whom Henry and Mary were wont to visit. A light glimmered through the solitary pane; and, as they approached it, a murmuring sound fell upon their ears.

"Wheesht! dinna mak a noise," whispered Mr Cuthbertson, shaking as he spoke.

Glancing through the little window, they perceived Henry Walton bending over the fire. His face was pale and agitated. There was blood upon his brow; and, as he stretched out his hand to stir the decaying embers, it appeared red and trembling. Mr Cuthbertson's hair stood erect. He placed his finger upon the boy's lips, and stole cautiously from the cottage. When at the distance of a hundred yards, he looked cautiously behind and around him; then said, in a deep whisper, while every joint shook—"Did you see the blood! He has murdered him!"

They reached the Manse, and communicating their fearful discovery to Janet, spoke of obtaining a warrant for Henry's apprehension.

The 5th of January dawned; but for a bridal it brought blood. Mary's senses were returned, but she knew not of Henry's departure, nor the absence of her father.

"Janet," said she, "send my Henry to me. If we have sinned against my father, we will now kneel together at his feet for his forgiveness! I will water them with my tears. He could never behold me weep; and he will not now spurn his poor child from his presence. Go, Janet, go! I cannot live unless we obtain his blessing."

Janet turned away and wept. She sighed, "My poor ruined bairn!" and hid her face against the wall.

"O Janet!" said Mary, "will you too hide your face from me! Forgive me, Janet—forgive your poor Mary! If I have given offence to my father, I should have sinned against heaven in marrying Mr Cuthbertson; for would it not be sinful to give the hand to one, while the heart clings to another? Come, Janet, do not turn from me. My father *will* bless us—Mr Cuthbertson himself will pardon us. Go call my Henry."

"The wretch is not here!" cried Janet, in the transport of her feelings; "and, oh, that the sea had swallowed him!—or buried you baith in its bosom—that I should say such a word!—before I had lived to see my Mary the wife of—a——but it shanna be spoken by me! O Mary! Mary!—may heaven hold ye guiltless!"

"Janet!" said Mary, grasping her hand, "have I merited this language?—or what—Janet—what is its meaning? You tremble! Speak, Janet!—speak!"

At that moment, a sound of voices was heard without. Mary glanced from the window; and beheld the mangled and bleeding body of her father, borne on the shoulders of a group of villagers! She gave but one scream!—but one thought flashed through her bosom. It was that she was a wife, the wife of a murderer!—of the murderer of her father!—and Janet caught her in her arms.

Mr Robertson was senseless, but his eyes still moved; and there was a quivering motion about his breast. His wounds were dressed by the village surgeon, Mr Leslie, but his recovery was pronounced impossible. Mr Cuthbertson and the boy had whispered their suspicions to the villagers; and their fears augmented their evidence of Henry's guilt. A party, who were despatched to the widow's to secure him, returned without procuring any farther trace of him. That Henry had committed the deed, no one but the surgeon aforementioned entertained a doubt.

As Mary recovered, she cast a chilling glance of despair upon old Janet. A few tears followed—they were but a few; and dashing them away—"Follow me, Janet!" said she, calmly, but sternly. The old woman obeyed, with a fearful and mechanical motion, as deprived of power to resist the command. She entered the apartment where her father lay. Mr Leslie watched anxiously over him; while Mr Cuthbertson, and three or four villagers, conversed in deep whispers in a corner of the room. They fell back at her approach. The kindest-hearted gazed on her with horror. The boldest shuddered, and avoided the touch of her garments. Every bosom was filled with dark thoughts; but none dared to whisper them in her presence. At the accusing glance of her tearless eyes, they crowded closer together. She approached the bed where her father lay, bent for a moment over his body; kissed his pale forehead; and, without a word, without a sigh, sat down by his side. The surgeon took her hand.

"Be comforted," said he; "your father will yet be able to explain all; and whoever is guilty, it will not be as some have said, and perhaps wish." And he cast an upbraiding glance towards Mr Cuthbertson.

"What do ye mean, Doctor?" inquired Mr Cuthbertson vehemently, and with a degree of indignation of which, to do him justice, he was seldom criminal. "What do you mean, Doctor?" he repeated, raising his voice. "God forbid that I should wish the blood of a worm to lie at the door o' my deadliest enemy! I have but gien evidence and testimony of the scenes and of the blood of which I was a witness—evidence, sir, that has convinced every weel-disposed mind, but your ain; which, it is weel kenned, bears the mark of the beast, and the image of the suspected person's! And could I, Doctor—could I see the blood of my best friend—the blood of my mair than faither—on the face and the hands of his murderer, and not give evidence to the truth?"

Mr Leslie would have replied, or ordered all, from the privilege of his profession, to withdraw. But Mary had rivetted her eyes upon the speaker. When he concluded, she arose, walked firmly across the floor to where he stood, and darting upon him a glance that struck dismay into his heart, and to the hearts of all—"Tell me, accusing spirit," she said, in a voice clear and slow, but dreadful and piercing as its wonted sounds were melodious—"tell me by what right ye accuse my husband?"

She had never heard Henry named as being guilty; and her fearful interrogation, the vehemence with which it was uttered, the absence of a single tear or a sigh—of anything like a woman's or a daughter's grief—clung like icicles to the hearts of all present. And she, whom yesterday they regarded as not inferior to an angel, they now shrank from as the wife of a murderer; nor merely his wife, but his accomplice—his accomplice in the murder of her own father! Overpowered by the conviction, one by one, they slunk fearful from her sight. Each, in his own way, told his suspicions; and, before night, the gentle Mary Robertson was whispered of with horror; yea, tongues that in the morning blest her, trembled to pronounce her name.

Although Mr Cuthbertson did not participate in the idle suspicions of those around him regarding her, yet, awed by her appalling look, the unearthly earnestness of her tone and manner, united with the almost horrible calmness of her sorrow, he stood silent, quaking in her presence; and as she cast upon him a deadly glance of accusation and, scorn, he also shrank from the room with the deluded villagers.

Mary again took her seat by the bedside. Night came and the morning dawned; and day succeeded day, but still she sat silent, motionless, and tearless; her cheeks pale and emaciated, watching as a spirit by the bed of death. Buried in her own griefs, her eyes fixed upon her father's face, sleep approached her not; of food she was almost unconscious when presented; and consolation fell upon her ears as on a lifeless thing. Life had, indeed, returned to her father; but, with it, reason had fled. Ignorant of all around him, he now fancied himself surrounded by his wife and his children. He spoke to them; he called them by their names. The follies, and the glad days of youth, passed in array before him. Then would he call upon his Mary, his poor lost Mary! With him she was the infant—the darling—the pride of his age—and the ruined wife, within an hour! Again would he weep, raise his hands to bless her, burst into a loud laugh in the midst of his blessing, and cry—"The murderers!" and in the same breath, "Your husband, Mary!" Still her features moved not, and her eyes were dry as summer heat.

The wild ravings of Mr Robertson tended to strengthen the conviction of Mr Cuthbertson and his friends, of the certainty of Henry's guilt; and the circumstances, augmented by all that indignation and personal suffering could suggest, were transmitted to his family at Buckham Priory.

Still Mr Leslie would admit of no steps for his apprehension; declaring that, although the life of Mr Robertson was beyond hope, yet, as the fever abated, a lucid interval would take place before death, when the facts of the melancholy event might be learned from himself. Mr Leslie and Mary were, therefore, the only individuals ignorant of the intelligence sent to the Priory; and, for many days, with but momentary intermission, he continued by the bed of the sufferer, eager to catch the first word of certainty regarding the innocence or guilt of his unhappy friend. Mary sat beside him as a pale ghost: she was neither heard to breathe nor seen to move; but gazed, the skeleton of what she was, on her dying parent.

He had sunk into a long and undisturbed sleep; and Mr Leslie having announced that when he awoke his reason would have returned, Mr Cuthbertson, Janet, and three of the kirk elders, were anxiously waiting in the room. He at length awoke, and, with a fond, but feeble voice, cried—"Mary!—my child!"

Every ear was strained to listen—every eye turned to the bed. She started from her long, death-like trance, and threw her arms around his neck.

"My father!" she cried wildly, and pressed her lips to his. They were the first words she had spoken since demanding of Mr Cuthbertson why he accused her husband.

"My dear Mary!" said he, "I feel I have but a few minutes to live. Call your Henry, that I may obtain his forgiveness—that you both may receive the blessing of a dying father! My dear, dear child!" he added, and endeavoured to press her to his breast

She started to his embrace. The tears burst in torrents from her eyes. A loud laugh rang through the room! She threw herself upon the bed, and cried—"Am I not the wife of a murderer! My father!—say—is not your Mary the wife of her father's———Tell me—tell me!—are the hands of my Henry clean?—shall I behold him again? Speak! Oh, speak, my father!"

"Your Henry! my beloved child!" said he; 'no! no! where is my son?"

Mr Cuthbertson hung his head in confusion. The elders looked upon him upbraidingly, and pressed closer to their minister.

Mr Robertson now briefly received from Mr Leslie an account of the suspicions that rested upon Henry, and their cause. He begged to be raised upon his bed; and, throwing his feeble arm around his daughter, said—"Forgive me, my dear child—forgive your dying father; and, when you meet your Henry, obtain me also his forgiveness. Two men sprang upon me on the heath. I cried to Heaven for help; for I thought not that man could hear me. I was wounded, cruelly wounded, when my cries brought a stranger to my assistance! He closed with the unhappy men, and by their cries appeared to overpower them. I heard his voice—it was Henry's!—my child, your injured husband's! I endeavoured to fly—where I ran I know not. I rushed bleeding over the heath—the earth seemed turning with me—and I remember nothing until this hour. And now I feel that death is with me! My friends—farewell!"

He took Mr Cuthbertson's hand—"Be a father to my dear child! Best, generous friend—bear Henry your forgiveness, and my blessing!" He pressed his daughter for the last time to his bosom—"God of the orphan, protect my Mary! Farewell!—my child—my joy—farewell!"

They raised her from his breast; but his spirit had passed into the presence of Him who gave it. Mary fell upon her knees; she raised her eyes to Heaven. The sealed up fountains of her heart gushed out afresh; and destroying joy held conflict with bitter agony, bereavement, and sorrow.

Weeks passed on—a successor to Mr Robertson was already nominated. Materials were placed around the Manse, in order to its undergoing improvements for his reception. To Mary they were a renewal of griefs; and at times she almost regarded them as an insult to her sorrows. She had now to leave the hearth where her first smile of infancy was greeted by a parent's kiss. The furniture being to her unnecessary, and not knowing where to remove it, she felt compelled to announce it for sale. Previously, she had sent her father's books as a present to Mr Cuthbertson. On the day of sale, many attended to procure a remembrance of a man whose memory they esteemed. A stranger, however, whose motive appeared a determination to secure all, without regard to the value, was the sole purchaser. Many surmises were whispered round regarding him; but he was unknown to all. On several of the carts, however, in which the goods were conveyed away, appeared the words—"*Thomas Cuthbertson, Esq., Cuthbertson Lodge.*"

Mary left the Manse on the preceding day, and remained an inmate with a farmer in the neighbourhood. She crossed the little wooden bridge in calm resignation, her eyes fixed upon the ground, and fearful to cast a look behind. But Janet followed and wept. On the third morning after leaving the Manse—"Janet," said Mary, "business of importance calls me immediately to England. At this season, and at your years, it will be impossible you can accompany me. In a few months—I hope—I trust, Janet, your Mary will be able to send for you again. In the meantime, at Mr Cuthbertson's you will find a home—in him a friend. I have prepared you a conveyance, and must myself depart tomorrow."

"Oh! dinna speak o't!—dinna think o't, my dear bairn!" cried Janet—"what is there in the season, or what is there in the distance, that I am na able to follow ye? Can ye think that I wad see you, you a young an' unprotected cratur, gang hunders an' hunders o' miles, wi' naebody to look after ye—naebody to gie ye an advice! O Mary! neither you nor ane o' your faither's house ever refused me a favour that I asked—an' it surely winna be my ain Mary that will deny me, in a case like this, an' for her ain guid? Dinna think o' leavin' me behint ye!"

Mary threw her arms around her neck. "Distress me not, Janet!" cried she—"it is impossible you can accompany me. But we shall meet again!"

Janet knew not the forebodings that distressed the mind of her young mistress, nor suspected the romantic and desperate nature of her journey.

"How can it be impossible?" continued she—"O my bairn!—how can it be impossible? But if it be His will that we maun part, oh, may it be only for a season, to accomplish the all-wise purposes o' His unerring providence; for He can bring good oot o' apparent evil. An' oh, mind, Mary, hinny, ye hae nae faither noo to direct ye!—Ye winna hae me to advise ye! But put your trust in the Faither o' the faitherless. He will be your director. An' oh, should ye enter the houses o' the ungodly, where family duty is unheard, as duly as ye rise, let the blessed thought o' the morning exercise in your faither's house, summon ye to your knees. And at night, when others sit down to cards an' to gambling, think that there were nae sic books in the house where ye were brought up; an' that the hours they spend in wickedness an' folly, were there spent in prayer and in edification, concerning the things that belong to our eternal peace. I ken, my dear bairn, that my words winna be wasted upon you. An' oh, let me say wi' the wise man—'If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.' Let them ca' it amusement—to kill time—or what they will. Life is uncertain an' time is precious. Flee ye rather to your closet, an' there, in secret, pour out your soul before a prayer-hearing God. An' only think, if shuffling pieces o' painted pasteboard, sacrificing fortune, health, an' reputation, be for a moment to be put in the balance wi' the sublime privilege o' holding conversation wi' Him that sitteth upon the throne for ever and ever, an' filleth immensity wi' his presence! They may mock you, they may persecute you; but think o' Him that was mocked, scourged, spit upon, an crucified on a tree, for your sake; an' remember that He has said—'They who are ashamed o' Him before men, o' them will He be ashamed before His Father who is in heaven. Pray for a humble an' a contrite spirit. In a' your trials may He be your rock o' support; an' wi' this assurance, I will go down to the grave in peace."

Next morning, Mary parted from her faithful domestic. The farmer, with whom she resided for a few days, sent a cart with her luggage to the inn, where the coach passed for Edinburgh. Every inhabitant in the village—the old, the young, and the middle-aged—were assembled round the house, to say "Farewell!" and bestow their blessing. Every eye was wet; and, as she came forth to take their hands, hers alone was dry. She spoke not, for anguish fettered her tongue; and as she, without a sigh, took the hand of the last, and went forth, a homeless orphan, from the midst of them, they might have said to each other—

"The sadness which thou seest is not sorrow,
Her wounds are far too deep for simple grief."

CHAPTER IV

HAIL, Prudence! well-fed child of Forethought—hail!
Cold, cautious Beauty, in a Quaker's bonnet—
Thou friend indeed, when friends and patrons fail—
Accept a stranger's, would-be-follower's sonnet!
At thy hard heart, the purseless fool may rail:—
What, though thy cheeks with pity ne'er were pale—

Ne'er went ye shoeless—dinnerless—and ne'er
From friendship begged a cup of meagre beer—
Ne'er bartered from thy back thy clothes for sale,
To help thy hunger—never met the sneer
Of wealth nor wisdom—ne'er a copper gave,
But saved thy pence a-day, and pounds a-year;
No man's mean debtor;—and no passion's slave:
Thy law, thy god—thy self; thy aim—TO SAVE.

NONE will believe Henry's feelings to have been of the most enviable description, as he crossed the little wooden bridge leading from the Manse; yet there are no moments of despair of such dark and continued depression, but that hope, like the flash of an angel's wing, will dart across the bosom; and as we would hurry onward in desperation, will chain us in incertitude. Acted upon by the contention of such feelings, and as the shadow of hope is more potent in the soul than the dense and solid gloominess of despair, he hurried across the heath to the cottage of the widow; where, having once met with Mary, he believed that there he should be more immediately associated with the presence of her spirit—that there, at least, she would still be present in remembrance; and perhaps he conceived, that, having found him there once, there also she would fly again to find him. The supposition was sufficiently improbable; but he is indeed a wise man who can resist believing that to be possible, which is the first of his desires. The widow was too blind to observe his agitation; too deaf to interrupt him by conversation; and he had seated himself on the round stool by the turf fire, brooding in silence how to act, when hearing

——"the cries of one in jeopardy,
He rose and ran."

With the parties the reader is already acquainted. Having rushed upon the assailants without identifying the object of their attack, he drew their fury upon himself; and holding with them a retreating conflict, separated them from each other. One of the ruffians, discharging a pistol without effect, and, overpowered by Henry's superior strength, screamed to his comrade for assistance; and, upon regaining his feet, both fled for safety, leaving their unknown antagonist to follow up the rescue of their victim. But the darkness of the night, and Mr Robertson's attempt at flight, thwarted his efforts. Therefore, after an ineffectual search for an hour, he re-entered the cottage.

Wearied by the loneliness of the objects around him, and urged to change of scene by the irksome despondency of his feelings, as the shadows of the morning began to throw their first uncertain glimmering over the fading stars, he arose from the dying embers, which had withdrawn both their heat and light; and approaching the bedside of the aged invalid, gave a last and an indistinct look of sympathy on her withered features, where time, disease, and poverty had left their ravages. The gloomy picture of wretchedness cut him to the heart.

"Farewell, Peggy!" said he, and he cast a parting glance around the hovel; where the dun rays of morning gave a deeper squalidness to the apartment, and rather than affording light, made misery visible.

"Are ye here yet, my bairn?" inquired she anxiously—"whar are ye gaun?" And she stretched forth her feeble hand to detain him.

He made no reply; but, drawing his purse from his pocket, laid it upon her pillow. From Mary's sufferings and circumstances, he feared the widow was deprived of her best or only friend. He farther considered himself as the principal cause of that deprivation; and deemed it his duty to make, as he best could, equivalent restitution. It was partly this feeling of niggard justice, but more a momentary gush of sympathy, that influenced the action, without reflecting upon what might be his own necessities. All he knew of want was from the pages of some novelist, as ignorant of its meaning as himself, or the picture of a beggar who solicited his alms; but, as he dropped him his loose pence, or a piece of silver, he stopped not to see hunger written on the eyeballs of the supplicant. Generosity, too is often the weakness of noble and ardent minds. It is a weakness that pleases in the act; and, even where misplaced or thoughtlessly bestowed, it is a "failing leaning to the side of virtue;" and the reflection, if not pleasing, has but little of bitterness.

For three hours he wandered across the moors, which were arrayed in all the loneliness of winter sterility. The sheep were crowded together, and penned on the hill tops. The whistle of some lonely shepherd, and the barking of his faithful colly in reply, were the only sounds that broke upon the silent torments of our traveller. Though without caring where, or in what direction, his journey for the day might terminate, he purposely deviated from the main path. About noon he gained the summit of Dunse Law. Had the earth been touched by the finger of a potent wizard, the burst of transformation could not have been more instantaneous or enchanting. For hours, and but a moment before, he had waded through the snows of a desert, where winter moaned to the freezing air, or slept in the clefts of the barren hills, undisturbed by life or vegetation. Such was the scene behind him. At his feet, the Merse lay like a vast garden shielded from the storm, and looking glad in conscious security. The Whitadder, breaking amidst hanging woods from the obscurity of the wilderness, poured its sound upon his ears. The sun, till then obscured by mountain mists, smiled over the snowy top of Cheviot, upon the fairy strath. The Blackadder, leaping from the icy fetters of its upland birth, ran to embrace the Whitadder; smaller streams hastened to join them; and the Tweed, rolling undisturbed, in deep majesty, down the middle distance, with the pride and the heart of a parent, received and had room for all. The sea, kissed by motionless clouds lay far to the east; and, cheerful towns, glad villages, rich villas, and farm-steads groaning beneath a load of plenty,

"Thick as autumnal leaves,"

studded the spacious valley, which was still lovely, though in its winter nakedness. The trees were leafless; but the numerous forest-looking plantations of pines, added a green variety to the scene.

Hitherto the bleak hills were in unison with his feelings; but misery and melancholy are so foreign to the natural temperament of humanity, that it is almost impossible for the heart to be so soured as to continue long wholly insensible to the influence of surrounding objects. An impression of comfort and cheerfulness was diffused around him; and, unused to sorrow, when gladness met his eye, his breast answered the landscape with a sigh, and felt lighter. He stood for a moment to contemplate it. It was one of those long deep draughts of admiring observation, when the eyes wander above, below, and around, till they swim in a whirl of poetry. But a man must be alone, before he can feel the soul of a breathing landscape. Were we travelling with a clever, impertinent, stage-coach hunter after the picturesque, who vents his stupid admiration by the mouthful at every turn of the road, we would go through Italy with such a fellow, and swear—"It is all barren." We know not how long he stood, for nature steals like sleep upon the senses; but he was aroused from his contemplation by the following unceremonious salutation—

(*To be continued.*)

THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.

(*Continued.*)

"That's a sicht no to be seen ilka day! Ye should come up here an' tak a peep at the Merse aboot the end o' May, an then ye wad see a sicht guid for weak een!"

The speaker was a brawny, ruddy-faced man; his age could not exceed forty. He wore a short dark-grey coat, a double-breasted waistcoat of the same material, white corduroy knee breeches, dark blue stockings, a pair of half leggins of the same consistency as his breeches, and above these were wrapt firmly-twisted straw ropes round the ancles, which converted his substantial double-soled shoes into all the purposes of snow-boots. He wore also a plaid, which was merely thrown round his neck as a protection to the throat. His stature might be five feet ten; and with him were two companions, who shared no small portion of his attention. The one was a pepper-coloured dog, betwixt the greyhound and the colly breed, which appeared, in all but speech, to answer every thought that arose in its master's mind. The other was a formidable hazel cudgel, or walking-stick, which was the better secured to his grasp by a piece of whip cord, forming a loop to its head, and twisted round his hand. This he, from time to time, surveyed with a look of admiring satisfaction; and Rover, as he called his dog, evidently shared in his complacency.

"Ye'll be for Dunse, now, I reckon?" continued he.

"What is the name of the town in the valley before us?" returned Henry.

"Odd! ye maun be a stranger here-a-way, I take," replied the other—"that's Dunse; ye've heard the saying, 'Dunse dings a' for honest men an' bonny lasses;' an' that's as true a saying as if it had been prented at the end o' the gospels. Ye wad say it yersel' if ye were acquant wi' them. There's mony a clever fallow come out o' Dunse, lad; frae Duns Scotus, doon to the present time. I belang there mysel', in a kind o' way. Ye'll be stoppin' there a' night, nae doot?"

"Perhaps I may," answered Henry, who, as he walked by the side of his new companion, scarce knew how to receive his instantaneous familiarity.

"Weel, I think ye had better," said the other, "if ye hae far to gang; for ye look gay sair fagged. I dinna think ye've been used wi' walkin', Sir. Hae ye come far?"

This was a question Henry felt inclined to answer drily; but there was something in the countenance of the other which made it impossible to be angry or offended with his inquisitive curiosity; and he replied—"At daybreak I left the house of a friend; but I cannot say the milestones have been sufficiently numerous to make me note the distance."

"I daresay no!—I daresay no!" resumed the stranger, with a well-pleased laugh. "It's a dreary bit that back owre there, at a' times. The puir peeseweeps starve to death on't, in the very middle o' simmer; an' they are the last craturs that I ken o' to starve! But as for lookin' for milestanes there, ye micht as weel expect to find the grace o' God in the court o' a Spanish inquisition. I think, by yer tongue, ye're an Englishman. What pairt do ye come frae, if it be a fair question?"

"From Devonshire," was the reply.

"Frae Devonshire!" said the stranger, with surprise, "Odd, I see, by the map, that's maistly at the Land's End! An' are ye gaun hame the noo?"

"Yes—perhaps," said Henry, vexed at everything that reminded him of his situation.

"Then ye arena vera sure about it, like?" returned the other; "but, if ye intend to walk a' the way, yer shoon winna be meikle in yer debt afore ye get to yer faither's. But is yer faither living?—that's the question."

"I believe so," said Henry, hastily, wearied of his inquiries.

"Then ye're no vera sure about that either!" resumed the incorrigible querist. "Ye've been a guid while awa maybe? I think ye look something like a better sort o' a sailor. Ye'll be in the King's service, I fancy?"

"I was," replied Henry, in a tone which indicated his determination to finish the conversation.

"An' what ship did ye belang to?" continued the undisturbed and unwearied inquisitor.

"The Biblia!" said Henry, with a quickness approaching to bitterness, and half determined to bid his companion walk on.

"The Biblia!" ejaculated the other, and stood still, staring upon Henry with astonishment. "Lord preserve us! I'll wager ye what ye like, ye're the young officer that was saved by Miss Mary Robertson! Am I no richt?"

"You are," said Henry; but he could feel anger no more. The mention of his Mary's name had molten down every angry feeling into a semblance of herself.

"Save us a', man! an' are ye him?" said the stranger "She is really an extraordinary being, Mary Robertson. My mither ance lived in her faither's parish; an' I hae heard her rame owre her guid qualities, till, although I had ne'er seen her then—an' I was double her age, ye may say—as sure as death, I could hae cut my fingers aff, when I thocht that she was a gentle cratur, an' a minister's dochter, an me nae better than a rough drover! An' whan I did see her, she was jist exactly what I think the angels will be like—an better, I'm sure, it's hardly possible for them to be. I'm confident it would tak the langest Lapland winter that e'er darkened snaw, to rin owre but the half o' what I hae heard in her praise, an' ken, frae my ain knowledge, to be fact."

During this harangue, Henry's feelings became too violent to be suppressed. He accused himself for having harboured a thought against the stranger; and, approaching his side, grasped his hand in both of his, and gazed in his face with a look of earnestness and emotion, that a single word would have robbed of half its worth. The other returned his pressure, with a fervency that evinced his sympathy.

"Faith, now, that's what I like!" said he; "that shews sterlin' gratitude! Gratitude is like a dumb man speakin'! Ye're a noble young chield, I can see by the vera look o yer e'en! I could swear by the grip o' yer hand, were it nae mair, that, officer though ye be, ye ne'er made a rope's end come across the back o' a better man than yersel."

The stranger was bound for Newcastle, and he at once seemed determined that Henry should be his companion by the way. On leaving Longframlington in the morning, the noble prospect which the lofty situation of the village commands, compensated for the damp chaff bed and flat ale of the inn. Behind them, rose Cheviot and the Scottish hills; to their right, the mountains of Cumberland were visible; and between, the long, broad, irregular valley, with its hundred farms—a nursery for rivers, and receptacle of upland streams; to their left, the sea—the Coquet Isle; and proud vessels were seen rejoicing on their course, as if conscious of their own magnificent beauty, bending their stately prows to the passing billow, and again rising in majesty, like a proud steed pawing the earth, bending its neck of thunder, and tossing it again in the air, in the pride of regal sublimity and conscious strength. Before them spread

a deep plain, through which winded the Coquet and the Wansbeck.

"Damp beds are a bad thing for the rheumatism," said Willie, as they reached the bridge over the former river; "an' they sell an excellent preventive here in the Angler's Inn. It's nae use palavering," continued he, as Henry remonstrated—"I tell ye it's nae use palavering; there's a lang road before us afore bedtime."

It would be an endless task, however, to follow our worthy drover through his houses of call, at which he felt a habitual thirst that he conceived to be natural. During most of the day, according to the adage, it did not rain but poured. The roads became at first clammy, and in the end almost impassable. At length, drenched, wo-begone, and bespattered with mud, like two spirits escaped from the Deluge, they reached Newcastle, and silently bent their steps down Northumberland Street. The rain abated none of its violence, and again Henry regretted the prodigality of his generosity, in parting with the entire contents of his purse. He had slept none the preceding night. Misery, fatigue, and the long continuance of the cold bleaching rain, battled in his heart, and pressed upon his pride, with a weight that caused it to bend, though it could not break it. He drew his breath quick and short. An anxious, disquiet feeling, approaching to peevishness, seemed sticking in his throat, and he longed that his companion would speak of halting for the night. After proceeding down Northumberland and Pilgrim Streets, nearly a mile in a direct line, Willie, halting before a gateway, said—"Now, I usually stop down here, at the Bird an' Bush; it's a kind o' carrier's quarters; but, ye see, the like o' the York Hotel is aboon my fit; an' I'll answer for our being comfortable. Come awa—faith we'll hae a nicht o't! A jug o' boiling brandy, mistress, for twa drowned men!" shouted he, as they entered the house.

Next morning, Henry desired his friend to favour him with his address.

'Now, what are ye driving at, Mr Walton?" said Willie, eagerly, and with a degree of sorrow; "ye are surely no thinkin' o' leavin' me already. Stay a day or twa, man, to see the toun. Ye see, I'm here about a bit lawsuit; an' if I dinna get it settled here, I dinna ken but I may hae to gang up to London. The matter o' five thousand pounds is worth the lookin' after! Hoots! dinna say ony mair about partin' yet—will ye no, Mr Walton?'

His honest and unsophisticated kindness was oppressive to his young companion, whose first wish was an opportunity to reward him.

"Whether we talk of parting or not," said Henry, "let me, at least, have the happiness of knowing where to find you hereafter."

"Weel," replied the other, "onybody kens whar to find Wull Watson, o' Finchey-hill, by Edrom, in the county o' Berwick. I maun awa oot, an' see my attorney body But noo, mind, Mr Walton, dinna be oot o' the way at denner-time; I tak it exactly at ane o'clock."

Henry being left alone, walked to the quayside, with the hope of finding a vessel in which he might obtain a passage for London; where, he conceived, it would not be difficult, amidst his own or his father's friends, to procure the advance of a sum sufficient to defray the expense of conveyance, and overcome his embarrassments.

A neat-looking brig was clearing out, and on the eve of sailing He stepped aboard, and inquired if he could be accommodated with a passage to London.

"Like enough," said the mate, who was busied in giving directions for hauling off; "but go aft, and speak to the master."

A black, porky, surly-faced man, in a shabby blue surtout, like a cloak thrown over a barrel, stood smoking a pipe by the side of the companion, and overlooking the preparations for sailing. To him Henry repeated his question.

"A passage!—why—yes," said the skipper; "taon mayst have a passage; but where's thy luggage?—we be hauling off."

This was a question for which Henry was unprepared; and his momentary hesitation did not escape the lynx-eyed tyrant of the brig, who immediately added—"You've got none, eh? Well—all's one wi' us; a guinea and a half, if you please, sir. That is wur usual fare—we make nyae reduction for want o' luggage, lad. Be quick, if ye please, sir—hang it! d'ye see, they are taking away the planks!"

On Henry's assuring him he would be paid on their arriving at London—"Ashore! ye swindling scamp!" vociferated the skipper. "Ashore!—or, by the Lord Harry! I'll chuck ye overboard! Here's a precious scoundrel!" cried he to the people on the quay—"tried to humbug mye out of a passage!"

Henry would have felled him to the deck, but he immediately sought protection among his crew; and the vessel being then about ten feet from the shore, he sprang upon the bulwarks, and with reckless violence threw himself into the midst of the assembled crowd. Those who the instant before were prepared to receive him with hootings, gathered around him in wonder; some declaring, he had made "a clean joomp of five yards!"

Rage, and the tumult of his troubled feelings, flashed from his eyes. He pressed through the throng like a madman. Many were wistful to offer him a kindness, but quailed at the wild haughtiness of his looks. The face of man sickened him. In every eye, he read suspicion and scrutiny; and hurrying across the bridge, and up Gateshead, he turned off the road into the fields, and threw himself down by the side of a deserted coal-mine, in secret to give vent to the bitterness of his spirit.

The day passed, and the boisterous agony of his bosom subsided into a gnawing calmness. At midnight, he arose shivering and benumbed, the night damp dripping from his glossy hair, and turned towards the town. He felt he would rather die than again be dependent on the generosity of his late fellow-traveller.

CHAPTER V

Well, of all teasing tortures, sure the worst
Is, on some tedious journey, to be curst
In a companion, with a shapeless thing
Clad in the scrapings of an insect's wing!
A pert vain fop, a libertine, and fool,
Who minces oaths per rood, and walks by rule;—
The barber's nightmare dream!—the tailor's dread!—
Who, if you cannot sleep, will "talk you dead!"
Who deems his sickly face, and scented glove,
Sufficient charms for every lady's love;
Nor doubts the brightness of his tortured hair,
To be a passport to insult the fair!

MARY's friends, who assembled to bid her adieu, had again returned, weeping, on their way to Burnpath. She had parted with the lingering few who attended her to the coach, seen their hands waved, and heard their farewell—"*God bless you!*" pronounced with tears; but her own cheeks were still dry. Yet their clear paleness, and melancholy expression, appeared like a marble sanctuary of grief, lighted by the lamp of sorrow which burned within. Her youth, and the elegance of her figure, rendered still more interesting by her garb of mourning, which cast its deep shadows over the ivory purity of her beauty, singled her out as an object of sympathy to some, and of admiration and scrutiny to all her fellow-passengers

It was a beautiful March morning, ruffled only by a breeze from the south-west, which, although not cold, was occasionally too strong to be pleasant. The whins were already

adorning the barren heath with their golden covering; and, as they approached the northern extremity of the mountains, in a moment, spring rejoiced in the song of the lark, and the labours of the husbandman. The empire of sterility was suddenly stayed in the pride of its desolation; and a straight line, stretching from the sea as far as the eye could reach, seemed to declare—"Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther;" while in summer the heather put forth its gorgeous blossoms, and the strong wheat, towering by its side, waved gracefully over it; the one touching the other, and each thriving in the strength of its own true region.

Mary's travelling companions grew clamorous in their admiration of the scene; and a small gentleman, who was determined to be nothing, if not critical, checked what he considered their want of taste, by observing that the landscape was spoiled by too great a proportion of water. While another remarked, that "he was perfectly of his opinion, and thought that the country would be much finer, were it not for the fir trees, and others that he did not know the name of"

"By my faith! but ye are twa judges, I warrant ye!" said a sturdy countryman, with an equally sturdy cudgel between his knees, and who had hitherto devoted his attention exclusively to a sagacious-looking dog which occupied a place by his side—"ye are twa judges, without a doot! Wud and water destroy a landscape! Was ye born in a coal-pit, gentlemen?—or in the region round about Bow-Bells, where the smoke and the trees, I understand, are meikle o' a colour? I thocht yer famous Doctor Johnson said we hadna a tree in a' our country!"

To these sarcastic, and half unintelligible observations, the young gentlemen deemed it prudent to be silent; and the first-mentioned connoisseur—who appeared to have been brought to the coach in a bandbox, fresh from the hands of his tailor—with the impudent and unfeeling effrontery of an empty coxcomb, who considers his own insignificant form and disagreeable face irresistible, commenced an attack upon Mary, who had hitherto remained silent, playing off his impertinent badinage, to the edification of his own ear, and the annoyance of all around him. But she, buried in her own thoughts, did not even deign to answer him with one monosyllable—with one glance of scorn. An angry scowl, from time to time, was given by the countryman, who sat facing him; and another from the dog, that looked in its master's face, and, catching the expression of his eyes, gave a low growl, indicating its wish to punish the object of his resentment. The young gentleman, however, still affected to despise the displeasure of his plebeian fellow-traveller; and, throughout two stages, he continued to persecute, with ill-timed mirth and vulgarity, which he mistook for wit, the lovely and unprotected being whom chance had thrown for a few hours by his side.

Sinking beneath the weight of her sorrows, she was resting her brow pensively on her hand, when the coach stopped for a few minutes at an inn by the way-side; where her loquacious companion, whose assumed familiarity now amounted to insolence, having called for a glass of brandy and water, attempted to pull her hand from her face, saying—"Come, my pretty dummie, if you can't speak, you can perhaps drink!"

"Drink yersel', ye infernal impudent puppy!" exclaimed the countryman; and, at the same instant, raising his cudgel, he dashed the glass in a hundred pieces, spilling the brandy and water on the inexpressibles of the exquisite, and causing the blood to gush from the ends of his fingers, which had received part of the blow.

"Scoundrel!" vociferated the trembling pattern of the fashions, half choked with pain and passion, while he stretched out, at arm's length, his gentle fingers, dripping with gore; and, casting a rueful look at his soiled cassimeres, added—"Scoundrel! you shall answer for this!"

"No a word oot o yer head! ye unmannerly vagabond!" cried the other; "no a word oot o' yer head!—or there's the grund for ye!"

And, suiting the action to the word, he seized him neck and heel, and the next moment the thing of "shreds and patches," his fashionables covered with March dust, was weeping, and mincing genteel oaths upon the pavement.

"Let him lie there, and be hanged to him," said the countryman; "he deserves a' he's got."

"No, no!" interrupted Mary; "let no one suffer upon my account. The ignorance of the young man is his sufficient punishment."

"I wad say that wad be bad logic, ma'am, in a court o' law," said her champion; "but, howsever, if I helped the insignificant cratur doon, I'll help him up again."

He leaped from the coach, raised the gentleman like a child in his arms, and placed him again in his former seat, remarking—"Noo, see that ye be quiet till we get to Edinburgh, least a warse thing happen ye. But I didna intend to smash yer bits o' leddy-like fingers, after a'. Are they sair hurt?" And taking them in his own Herculean fist to examine them, he inquired—"Has ony o' ye a bit rag?"

The coach drove off; and Mary, having dressed the wounds of her late tormentor, he hung his head upon his breast, and was silent during the rest of the journey.

For some time they had seen Arthur's Seat uprearing, in bold magnificence, its stony front, and bearing, even at this view, some resemblance to a lion preparing to spring upon its prey; together with the Calton Hill and its observatory, and the proud castle, high towering in gigantic majesty between them, like the genius of war, defying its thunderbolts. And now the fair City of Palaces, glistening in the sun, opened to their right, like a sea of silver; while, to their left, grey and venerable with years, rose pile upon pile, house rising upon house, in eccentric but sublime array, bearing the shapes of departed ages; and their hoary summits, partly veiled in the cloudy columns which floated around them, seemed like the ghosts of time, looking down, "more in sorrow than in anger," from their irregular and strong towers, on the beauty and order of modern improvements; while Leith, stretching out its arms to embrace it, and a hundred fair gardens smiling around their union, with the blue Frith circling them, and bearing the wealth of other nations to their threshold, make Edinburgh appear, to the eye of the traveller, one of earth's fairest cities.

On their stopping at the Black Bull, the countryman sprang first to the ground, and, with the air of a cavalier politely assisted Mary from the coach.

"I ask your pardon, ma'am," said he; "but, as I ken ye are a stranger, if ye will alloo me, I'll jist tak yer bit trunk under my arm, and shew ye to ony place ye may be gaun to; for I ken every fit o' Edinburgh, jist as weel as I ken Burnpath or Cowdingham."

She expressed her gratitude for his kindness; but begged that he would not think of burdening himself with her trunk.

"Burden! hinny!" said he; "I wush I micht ne'er hae a greater burden, than to carry it back th' nicht again, to whar it cam frae! Mind ye, thae cadie an' porter bodies are extortionable craturs, whan they get haud o' ony ane that they think they can impose upon." And, throwing the trunk upon his shoulder, he added, "Now, ma'am, if ye'll jist say whar ye wish to gang, I'm at yer service."

Mary knew but little of Edinburgh, and that little appeared to her like the broken remembrance of a dream. She was here without friends, almost without an acquaintance; and the only individual whose house she could look to as a temporary home, during her stay in the Scottish capital, was

a commercial gentleman, called Lindsay, residing in Brown Square, who had been highly esteemed by, and was distantly related to her father. On her signifying a wish to be conducted there—"To Brown Square!" said the countryman, whom the reader will have perceived was no other than Willie Watson, the Berwickshire drover—"To Brown Square!—ye shall be there in ten minutes. An', besides, it wunna tak me oot o' my way in the least, for my line o' business, ma'am, lies in the Grassmarket; an' I can just whup down Merchant Court, an' be there in a jiffy, after seein' ye safe."

On arriving at the house of Mr Lindsay, the footboy who opened the door stated that his master was in Glasgow, and that Mrs Lindsay and daughters were at home, but were then dressing, in order to go out to an evening party. Mary's heart felt sick. There was a coldness in the accent and manner of the very boy. She knew Mr Lindsay only; his wife and daughters she had never seen. She hesitated in what manner she should give in her name, and her confusion became visible. She was shewn into a parlour, and Willie, having placed her trunk in the passage, seemed anxious to witness her reception before leaving; but Mary took his hand, thanked him for his friendly care and attention, and desired that, if possible, she might see him again before he left town.

"Ye may depend on that, ma'am," said he, "ye may depend on that"—and a tear stole down his weather-beaten cheek—"I wad hae liket to see hoo ye are to be situated before I left ye; but, although I am only a plain farmer, I'm no insensible o' what is due to guid breedin'. Sae I'll bid ye guid-day the noo, ma'am; but I'll mak it my business to ca' the morn, afore I gang east again; an', if ye hae ony word to send, I wull tak it as a favour to be the bearer."

The honest drover, making a slight bow, worth all the formal suppleness of superficial politeness, took his leave. Mary remembered having seen him formerly; and had heard him spoken of, but only as a wrestler and a pugilist, whose quarrels were in the mouth of every one, and the terror of a peaceable neighbourhood. But now she could only look upon him as a warm-hearted man, who, whatever were his faults, could not be destitute of redeeming virtues.

Half-an-hour passed, and she was still left to muse upon her reception, without seeing either Mrs Lindsay or her daughters. She felt it as an indignity to a friendless orphan—to the only child of a man who befriended them, and placed them in the path of fortune. She had arisen with the intention of leaving the house, and seeking a lodging elsewhere, when Mrs Lindsay and her three daughters, rustling in a gaudy and tasteless display of showy silk, rich brocade, and Brussels lace, with head-dresses as ridiculous and unnatural as silver tissue, golden ears of corn, artificial hair, and the wearied fingers of their maid could make them, sailed into the room. Each in her turn slid towards Mary, like a boat gliding for a few yards by a single stroke of the oars—halted within three feet, like a young recruit at the word of command—dropped a low and graceful congee—gently extended the tip of her fore-finger—smiled—whispered—and withdrew to a chair.

The mother and daughters having paid their formal salutation to their visiter—"You look shockingly pale, child," said the former; "don't you think so, girls?" And again turning to Mary—"I believe your father and Mr Lindsay were acquainted—were they not?"

"They *were*, ma'am," answered Mary, shocked at the cold indifference of a question so little to have been anticipated.

"Your father is dead lately, I think my husband was saying," returned the other

Mary could only reply, "Yes!"

She would have wept, but indignation at the unfeeling ingratitude of the other withheld her tears.

"And met with his death rather unfortunately too, did he not?" continued Mrs Lindsay.

This was too much. A crowd of thoughts and recollections flashed at once upon her bosom; she replied only with a sigh, and the tears burst forth.

"Nay, do not distress yourself, dear child," said the wife of her father's friend—"those sort of things will happen, you know; and our tears can do no good."

"Perhaps Miss Robertson is fatigued with her journey and will take a glass of wine," said the youngest daughter, whose heart was not touched by the frigid affectation of her mother and sisters; and she hastened to present it.

"I am sorry Mr Lindsay is from home," added the matron, "and we do not expect him before to-morrow. Do you intend making any stay in town?"

"Only a few days," rejoined Mary.

"And perhaps you have not yet procured a lodging?" inquired the other

"Oh, dear mamma," replied the youngest, who at that moment entered with the wine, "I am sure Miss Robertson will have no objections to sleep with me; and, if she only do, I shall be so happy."

"True, child!" returned the mother; "and I should be very happy if she would: but remember your father is from home, and we are just going out to a party, so that you see the thing is quite impossible—we cannot leave Miss Robertson alone."

"Nay, nay, mamma," said the daughter; "you and sisters can give my apologies to Lady Sillerdykes, (should she discover I am absent,) and I shall remain at home to bear Miss Robertson company, which will give me a great deal more pleasure."

"Do not name it, my dear friend," said Mary; "you nor any one shall make a sacrifice of enjoyment for me. I have met with trials more severe than the procuring of a lodging, or passing a night alone."

"She is the most foolish, wilful girl in the world," resumed the mother. "To talk of not going to my Lady's!—when—would you believe it, Miss Robertson?—these four dresses, which were made for the occasion, cost one hundred and twenty pounds! For the life of me, I don't know what her father will say when the bill is presented! And yet to talk of not going!—not going, indeed! Do you suppose if you will not appear in public, that your father is to keep you in private all your life!"

"La! now mamma!" said the laughing girl, "how you do talk! Get husbands for sisters before you think of me."

As she spoke, a loud knocking was heard at the front door. Mrs Lindsay bit her lips—the two elder sisters looked to each other in dismay. The youngest flew smiling to the passage, and entered, holding her father's hand, saying—"Miss Robertson, father!—your friend—my friend—from Burnpath."

"Miss Robertson!" exclaimed Mr Lindsay, who had unexpectedly returned. He hurried forward, pressed her hand fervidly within his. He gazed on her face for a few moments with silent tenderness; and, at length, in a voice broken with emotion, said—"Welcome!—welcome, beloved child of my best friend!—welcome to my house—to *your* home!" Still holding her hands, and turning to his wife and daughters—"Behold," said he, "all that remains of our first benefactor! Mrs Lindsay, henceforth be to her a mother; children, regard her as a sister"

"Oh, I am sure I shall," said the youngest, fondly smiling in her face—"and love her too."

"At present," said Mary, "I shall be with you but a few days; but for your affection for my beloved father, accept his orphan's tears—accept her gratitude."

"Let it be for a few days, or for a few years," added Mr Lindsay—"whatever is mine, you may at all times command

Mrs Lindsay now endeavoured, by overwrought civility, to atone for her past indifference. And having, as she conceived, by her attentions and protestations of affection for Mary, sufficiently delighted her husband to venture upon informing him of the invitation to Lady Sillerdykes—"My love," said she, with an endearing smile, "would you believe it!—my Lady Sillerdykes has sent your daughters and me the kindest invitation in the world, to attend her party to-night! There is to be a Marquis there!—several lords!—and I don't know how many baronets!"——"And needy fortune-hunters," added her husband, "ruined gamesters, and corrupters of morals, *ad libitum*."

"Oh! shocking, love!" replied Mrs Lindsay; "you really distress me!—you are always so cynical! But you know, if you won't, I *must* take our children into society, like other people. And, with our prospects, the present honour, I assure you, my dear, is not to be overlooked."

"Oh! doubtless! doubtless!" said Mr Lindsay, with a sarcastic smile; "its advantages will be incalculable!"

The worthy merchant, not having deemed it prudent to set up his own carriage, and Brown Square being but indifferently situated for the approach of one, Mrs Lindsay and her two daughters had the mortification of walking to the College, to procure a hackney-coach; in which miserable vehicle they were to come in contact with the coroneted and crested equipages of their companions for the night, in the Crescent.

In the company of Mr Lindsay and his youngest daughter, Mary forgot the insulting coldness of her reception. She undisguisedly related to him all the events which had recently transpired at Burnpath; save one—one on which all the rest in a measure revolved—her own marriage. And this she wished not to conceal from him—but feared, and knew not how to communicate it. It was known to but few beyond Burnpath; and until she should see Henry, or hear from him, she knew not how far she might act wisely in divulging it; and his mysterious silence, since his departure, increased her hesitation.

Next day, Willie Watson strode across Brown Square, "To inquire after the bit lassie," as he said, "for he feared, as far as he could judge, she wad meet wi' but a blae reception!"

He had heard of her marriage with Henry; and his name being at the moment uppermost in his thoughts, on the servant opening the door, he inquired—"Is *Mrs Walton* within, this morning?"

"There is no such person here," said the boy, attempting to shut the door.

"Nae sic person here!" said Willie, intercepting him with his foot—"Nae sic person here, do ye say? What's come owre her then? Did I no bring her trunk here yesterday?"

"Oh! Mrs Walton!—beg pardon!—yes, yes! I had forgot!" said the crafty urchin, while a laughing devil twinkled at the corners of his eyes; and hurrying to the parlour, where Mary was sitting with Mrs Lindsay and family—"A person wishes to speak with *Mrs Walton*," said he.

"Mrs Walton!" responded all, raising their eyes inquiringly—"Mrs Walton!"

She trembled—blushed—cast her eyes upon the ground—shed a sudden tear—and, rising with the dignity of a princess, laid her hand upon Mr Lindsay's, saying—"Yes, my dear friend, I *am* Mrs Walton; hereafter you shall know all. Shew the stranger to me."

"How singular!" ejaculated Mrs Lindsay.

"Did you ever!" exclaimed Miss Lindsay, in the attitude of adoration.

"Such a discovery!" cried her sister.

"Ah! my dear Mrs Walton!" said the youngest, leaping towards her, "and you *are* married, are you? Well, I wish you joy with my whole heart."

"I trust I may rejoice that it is so, my amiable friend," replied Mr Lindsay; "but reveal nothing to me which it would give you pain to relate."

Willie Watson was heard stalking along the passage, shaking the walls "with thundering tread." Making his best bow to the company, and firmly smoothing down his hair over his forehead, as he began to speak, he began also to smooth round his hat; and, continuing to turn it in his hand, said—"I ask your pardon, leddies, and yours, too, sir for coming in amang ye in a figure like this; for it doesna do to be owre particular in my line o' life. But, ye see, having a great regard for Mrs Walton's connections—the memory o' her worthy faither in particular—no to mention that the like o' me has even the honour o' being familiar, I may say, wi' her, as wi' her worthy husband, the son o' the great Sir Robert Walton o' Devonshire, ye ken, that (I saw it in the papers mysel') gied twa thousand pounds, no lang syne, for an Arawbian mare—I say, no even to mention this, coming to the toun wi' her yesterday, I couldna think o' gaun hame till I heard how she was situated, an' to see if she has ony word to send east by to Berwickshire."

His professing acquaintance with Henry, rendered him doubly interesting to Mary, and she more than forgave the confusion he caused by the betrayal of her secret. He further had mentioned circumstances relating to her husband's family with which she was unacquainted; and, with the natural energy of her manner, she thanked him for the kindly interest he manifested in her behalf. Mr Lindsay, to testify the sincerity of his welcome, placed him a chair beside his own, and ordered a morning dram. (A false and pernicious token of hospitality, which we trust to see exploded for ever.) One glass begot another; and between Mr Lindsay and the drover, an acquaintance that had been forgotten for almost thirty years was revived. The elder Misses Lindsay and their mother, were forgetting the shock they sustained on the entrance of the unpolished figure before them, in their redoubled attentions to the—wife of a Baronet's son!—when the Honourable Timothy Higgins was announced.

"Oh! shocking!" exclaimed Miss Lindsay, rising in perturbation—"and that odious man!—shew the gentleman into the drawing-room."

Mr Lindsay was at this moment in the midst of a school adventure, in which Willie Watson and himself had been the principal actors.

"The Honourable Fiddle-de-dee!" said he, having heard the words "odious man," applied to his old school-fellow—"Shew him in here. I certainly am entitled to see that no *honourable* visiters to my house be *dishonourable*. Shew him in here."

"Oh! horrid!—Mr Lindsay, you are the most unaccountable man"——said Mrs Lindsay.

"My love!" replied the husband.

"I'll be bidding ye guid-day, Mr Lindsay," said Willie "for, although I hae the honour to be acquainted wi' Mr Walton, I maun say, after a', that drovers arena just the kind o' company that yer Honourables, and Richt Honourables, wad like to sit doun wi'; though cast off the bit coat, an' they wad maybe find wha is the best man, for a that."

"Be seated," said Mr Lindsay; "whoever may come, my house is large enough for an old friend."

Mr Higgins had arrived on the preceding day from England, was at Lady Sillerdykes soiree in the evening, and having escorted the Misses Lindsay and their mother home, had sent in his card to pay his respects to the ladies in the morning. Miss Lindsay was his partner during the evening; and she had already informed Mary that he was a divine creature, though his form was rather *petit;* and he had had the misfortune, a few weeks ago, as he told her, to have his right hand wounded in an affair of honour, which caused him at present to wear it in a sling, and rendered him indescribably interesting.

The mighty Mr Higgins now entered, in all the imposing dignity of five feet two; bowed, smiled—bent his body—begged they would excuse his misfortune; saw Mary—blushed, shook—turned his eyes to the farther end of the room—started, and almost fainted at the feet of the ladies! Mary slightly, and somewhat disdainfully, returned his confused bow. Mr Lindsay was rising to welcome him, when, to the horror of all, Willie Watson stalked across the floor, offered his hand to the Honourable and petrified Mr Higgins, saying—"Weel, sir, hoo's a' wi' ye the day? Hoo's your fingers? I'm very sorry for that bit lick I gied them yesterday?"

Mr Higgins trembled—perspired—grew pale—stuttered he would call again—turned his back upon the drover, and muttering something about engagements, to the astonishment of the ladies, bowed, blushed, and backed out of the room.

"I fear, my dears," said Mr Lindsay, "your Honourable has met with a surprise;—he has made but a short visit."

"The less o' his company the better," said Willie, "if we may judge by the specimen Mrs Walton an' me had o' it on the coach yesterday."

He then narrated his impertinent conduct towards Mary, and bursting into a loud laugh, said—"But it wad hae been nae joke, after a', if I had left his bits o' honourable fingers on the road, for the craws to build their nests wi'. Mrs Walton," continued Willie, as he rose to depart, "if I micht mak sae free as to ask a favour, ye wad greatly oblige me by a word or twa in private."

This being granted, he proceeded—"I was just wishing to ken, ma'am—if it's no impertinent in me to ask—when ye heard frae Mr Walton. For, to tell ye the truth, ma'am, I like him maist as weel as ye can do yersel'. I gaed frae Dunse to Newcastle wi' him; an' four happier days I never spent in my life. He invited me, if ever I was up in the south, to come ower and spend a while at his faither's. But I've heard naethin' o' him since he left Newcastle."

He forebore alluding to the nature of Henry's disappearance, or the circumstances attending it; for what he wanted in politeness he had supplied to him in feeling. It was a question which, of all others, Mary would have avoided; for the thought that she *had not* heard from Henry was her deepest affliction. But she could not tell a falsehood; and, least of all, to one who gloried in the thought of being her husband's friend, and who had acted as hers. Melting into tears, she replied, that she had not.

Willie drew his coat sleeve across his eyes.

"Forgie me, ma'am!—forgie me for askin' ye," said he; "but I expect to be in London very soon; an', if I dinna see *you* in *Devonshire*, I'll at least bring ye word frae it! Guid-day the noo, ma'am!—guid-day!" And again drawing his sleeve across his eyes, the good-natured drover bent his way to the Grassmarket.

CHAPTER VI.

Withering and scorching as the eye of God,
Is the proud glance of injured innocence,
When bent by woman upon worthless man.
For, what are threatening frowns, or strength of arm,
While virtue grasps omnipotence, and wields
The burning electricity of heaven,
At which a giant trembles! To behold
A woman fixed as death—deep, calmly desperate—
Ready to die, and die with dignity—
Wearing her honour in her life's last blood—
Makes naught the fiercest purposes of man,
And buries passion in his blushing soul!
Or who could view the tear steal silent down
The cheek where beauty blossomed, ere the winds
Of misery nipped its roses in their bud,
Nor beg that he might chase that tear away
Though falling for an enemy?—Or feel
His heart burst forth—his hand already raised
To strike in her defence. For woman's tears
Are as a sovereign's voice whom all men love;
And there is neither left the will, nor power,
To stand a rebel to their fond appeal.

On the day after leaving the worthy drover, Henry Walton obtained a passage to London, from whence he found but little difficulty in pursuing his journey to his father's house.

Now, when Henry Walton returned to Buckham Priory, the seat of his ancestors, he found that his parents were from home; and there accompanied him from London a Sir Mark Wallingford—a gay man and a man of the world, but withal a heartless man.

Henry longed for the return of his parents, that he might acknowledge to them his marriage with Mary Robertson, and that he might hear their lips pronounce her *their* daughter.

One morning, as Sir Mark was passing through the hall he perceived a letter, in a fine female hand, addressed to Henry, and bearing a Scottish post-mark. It was a temptation he could not resist. He took up the letter and placed it in his pocket. "A Scottish Venus!" said he—"A Greenland dove!" The letter was from Mary, announcing her intention of leaving Scotland for her husband. The words, husband and wife, with which the letter began, were lost upon Wallingford. He resolved to proceed to London, and there wait the arrival of his friend's northern rosebud.

When Mary, therefore, arrived in London, she found Sir Mark Wallingford there to receive her in her husband's name, whom he said he expected from Devonshire daily. The appearance of the house to which he conducted her, was not in keeping with his professions; yet she had no suspicion.

A day, however, did not pass, until the villain unmasked the villany of his soul. It was now that all the energy of Mary's character was revealed. The villain felt himself crouch in her presence; and, although he at first ordered the landlady to keep her a prisoner, that personage soon tired of acting gaoler, without knowing who was to pay. His threatenings and his visits ceased.

One day, the landlady abruptly entered the apartment, and said—"I ask your pardon ma'am—and, to be sure, I am very sorry to see a young creature in distress—but I has a family of my own to provide for; and, as you 'an't paid last week's lodgings, I shall thank you ma'am, to have the goodness to settle it now; and, as I must look to the character of my children, poor things, in what sort of people I keep, I hope, ma'am, you will have no objections to qui my house next week."

Mary raised her eyes slowly to her face, and again met the cold, stupid, and suspicious glance which she had repelled with indignation on her first entering the house. She drew her hand slowly across her brow, like one awaking from a dream, and still in doubt regarding its reality. Her eyes became fixed, deeply fixed, on the prying and unfeeling countenance of her intruder; and her lips quivering with emotion, she exclaimed—"Woman!"

"Don't woman me, madam," retorted the other; "it perhaps an't for me to judge, but Heaven knows I always thought there was too much kindness and attention about thy gentleman to stand long, or mean any good. Thou art a quiet enough lady, I own that, but quiet looks an't to pay me, nor do any thing for my family. I may think wrong about his leaving thee in this here sort of way; but, why, all the neighbours say the same about it already; and, as I has nothing but the good name of my house to depend on for a livelihood, I hope you will think of paying me, and remove as sonn as possible."

Mary's natural spirit and self-possession had returned. During this insulting harangue, she arose to her feet. Her

breast no longer heaved, her lips no longer quivered, and her eyes no longer wept; she no longer trembled, seemed sorrowful, nor exhausted; the very tears dried on her glowing cheeks; she stood erect and motionless as a pillar of death, bending her piercing and immovable gaze on the object before her; every feeling absorbed in one—and that one measureless disdain. She continued for a few moments in the same silent and sublime attitude, her eye resting on the speaker with ineffable scorn; and, taking her purse, which contained but a few shillings more than the sum demanded, she counted out the paltry debt, and placing the amount on a table before the landlady, she waved her hand in disgust, and, in a tone which commanded obedience, exclaimed—"Away!"

With the servile cowardice of an inferior mind, the other placed her hand upon the money, and silently obeyed; but, on reaching the door, she hesitated—turned; and the sound of the silver having brought her back to humanity, she falteringly ventured to inquire—"Could I serve you in anything, ma'am?"

Without speaking, Mary impatiently stamped her foot, and again waved her hand; while the other, trembling beneath her own insignificance, slid out of the room.

On finding herself again alone, Mary's feelings gushed back into their former channels; and the heartless indignity adding its sting to her other sorrows, her tears burst forth anew, and flowed faster than before. She sank upon her knees, and, in the excess of her grief, prayed that she might be given strength, and taught resignation. Her petition was humble, earnest, and importunate; and, as she breathed a fervid and anxious *Amen*, tranquillity fell upon her troubled spirit, as the morning dawn silently rolls the mist from the valley, or melts away the cloud upon the hills. It was not hope, but a something more than hope, which no physician but prayer can impart; as though a radiant angel had winged his way to heaven with our request, and from his wake of glory beamed back holiness on our souls.

Mary's first act was now to change her lodgings where she might be secure.

CHAPTER VII.

His was not madness, such as maniacs shew,
But love—deep love—absorbing agony—
A withering of the heart—a shroud of wo—
The tossing of a bark upon a sea
That ever doth in storm and darkness flow—
Whose shores are death, whose waves are misery!
A wailing of the spirit, and a grief
That knew no hope—no soothing—no relief!

Pain made its dwelling in his lonely breast,
Where wo bent o'er the sepulchre of hope;
Pale lamentation was its cheerless guest,
And there would anguish, there would sorrow stop,
And make their habitation. Peace and rest
Had left it desolate. Despair might grope
And lose its way within it. Every ray
Of hope had died—of joy had passed away.

Six weeks had passed, and the domestics of Cuthbertson Lodge heard no tidings of their master; for he had left it, none new whither, shortly after the funeral of Mr Robertson. Every individual in the house and upon the estate, from Janet Gray down to the cow-boy who herded by the hillside, began to feel alarmed for his absence. Several of the tenants and household were met in conclave before the Lodge, deliberating upon the cause, and concerting measures to procure intelligence respecting him. An elderly cotter, holding a snuff-box in his hand, and into which he, ever and anon, dipped his finger and thumb, without, however, raising their contents half-way to his nostrils, assuming a countenance of more than usual seriousness and sagacity, said—"I dinna ken, sirs—an' I dinna like to be forward in giein' an opinion—but I'll tell ye what it is—an' its no only my opinion, out, I may say, it's the opinion o mair folk than ane—do ye ken, I think there was an unco change upon the laird afore ever he gaed awa:—that's what I think."

"Losh, John, man," interrupted another, "whar do ye get yer news? I'm sure we a' kenned that."

"Weel, neebor," replied the composed cotter, "I wasna sayin' that ye didna ken; but ye'll no hear what a body has to say. Noo, I was sayin' that, in my opinion, the laird was greatly altered; but I'll tell ye hoo—and this is a fact: whether I was workin' about the plantin', biggin at the dykes, or even ditchin'—it was nae matter what; whanever he cam past, he wad hae stopped an' had a crack. 'Weel, John,' he wad hae said, as familiar like as if we had lived butt an' ben—'Weel, John, hoo's a' wi ye the day? Is the wife an' the bairns a' weel?' 'Thank ye, sir, I wad hae said—'we are a' meikle about our ordinar. How are a' the folk about the lodge?' Ye may lauch, sirs, but, as sure as death, I used to ask him just in that familiar way Do ye think I wad tell ye a lee? 'Hae ye onything in yer mull the day, John?' he wad hae said again; 'ye keep famish sneeshin'—whar do ye get it?' 'I daresay, sir,' says I, 'I've nae particular merchant, but sometimes frae ane, an' sometimes frae anither.' Noo, we just used to crack in that sort o' way, for maybe half an hour at a time, twice or thrice a-week. For he used to say, 'I like to hear John enter fairly upon a crack—he's sae entertainin'.' I canna mak oot, sirs, what ye are a' geeglin' at. It's my opinion ye think I'm tellin' ye an untruth. Ye may either believe it or no; but I'll tell ye what it is—for some time afore he gaed awa, there was a great change upon the laird, and he used to pass me, without gommin' me ony mair than if I had been an' auld milestane; never even looked the road I was on; or said, 'Is that you John?' but gaed saunterin' and seighin'—Lord, preserve us! I could hear his seighs, I'll no say a quarter o' a mile aff, but—I canna tell ye hoo far. Noo, what I infer frae a' this, is, that the laird is greatly changed; or, in my opinion, that that there is something upon his mind."

"Weel, if ye be dune wi' your sermon, John, an' a body may put in a word edgeways," said a farmer, "I'll tell ye, without palaver, that the laird was a wee thocht unsettled afore he left the lodge, an' ought to be seen about. I doubt the back-gaun o' his marriage has been a sair upsettin' to his reason, honest man; and it will be a pity—that's a' that I can say. I think his agent in Kelso should be written to—and that immediately."

Janet Gray, who, from the period of Mary's leaving Burnpath, had resided in the lodge, as a sort of superior housekeeper, was about to be consulted, when the laird himself was seen proceeding up the avenue, and, like a mischievous schoolboy, with his cane, switching the heads from the flowers which adorned the sides of the path. The group remained to welcome his approach, for they not only respected him as a master, but loved him as a brother. But the incorrigible cotter, whose assurance was after the same quality as his equanimity, still holding the snuff-box in his hand, and deeming it an irresistible opportunity of giving ocular proof of the familiarity on which he had enlarged, shouldered his spade, and proceeded down the avenue to meet him.

"I'm glad to see ye back, sir—unco glad, indeed," said he, holding the snuff-box to his master's breast.

"Glad!" exclaimed Mr Cuthbertson, as if starting from a dream, and dashing the proffered box to the ground—"glad! the rivers run wi' sorrow, and the sun has burnt up joy!—and ye say ye are glad!—glad!—hae ye nae sympathy? The earth is a lump o' desolation, an' hoo can ye be glad!"

"I'm very sorry ye should think sae, sir," said the tranquil cotter stooping and lifting his box—"very sorry to

hear ye say sae, indeed; for, in my opinion, Sir, if we war to count owre the mercies we enjoy, instead o' the things which we covet"——

"Excuse me, John," said Mr Cuthbertson, kindly shaking the hand of the cotter; "I doubt I've no been sae pleasant to ye as I should hae been. But I was kind o' daized and stupid ways when ye spak; for I've had but little rest, and a guid deal to mak me unhappy lately. I've skailt yer snuff, but I'll tak care that yer box be replenished. But oh, John! John, man! when a' the best and the dearest hopes and feelings o' the heart are spilt, they are like water upon the ground, that canna be gathered up again!"

The cotter was about to make one of his accustomed prose replies; but, as his master returned to recollection, the fulness and anguish of his heart returned also, and he turned away from the never-ruffled speaker, and proceeded towards the Lodge. The others drew near to congratulate him on his arrival, and express the uneasiness they had felt.

"Thank ye, thank ye, friends," said he, passing on, and endeavouring to conceal the emotions to which his last conversation had given rise; "I'm unco weel. Here is braw weather for the harvest."

"Mercy! hear that!" whispered the farmer; "he says braw weather for the harvest! I'm sure we'll hae nae shearin' in this part o' the country for twa months to come. Wheat is hardly in the shot-blade yet."

"Do ye observe," added another, as he entered the house, "how careless he is wi' his claes, and how particular he used to be; he wadna gaen out owre the door wi' a single jesp on them."

"Ay," said a third; "an how frichtfu' his beard looks."

"Preserve us!" cried a fourth, "are ye a' daft thegither? Hasna the laird been a journey?—an' do ye think, when folks are travellin', they can hae a tailor or a barber for ever at their elbow! A bonny story truly, that a man maun be said to be out o' his head, because he's no jist as prim and preceese as a mantie-maker! An' what's the great fault ye hae to find wi' him sayin, that this is 'fine weather for the harvest?' Is it no fine weather for bringin' it forward; an', therefore, I say it's fine weather for the harvest—an' the laird was richt. Had he said, 'Here's fine harvest weather,' ye micht hae spoken—but"——

"Hech, man! where did ye learn to argue?" interrupted a listener; "ye wad made a famous writer to the signet."

"Or an advocate before the Lords o' Session!" returned another, sarcastically.

"It wad be worth half-a-crown to hear him and John the hedger yoked," added the farmer. And the party dispersed.

The domestics in the Lodge were endeavouring to testify their joy at their master's return. Each flew to proffer him a hundred little services, or make inquiry into every want. Old Janet threw aside her stocking; and, without performing the customary formalities of adjusting her cap and apron, bustled down stairs to welcome her favourite and friend. He was kindly shaking hands with the servants, and thanking them for their attention. They withdrew as Janet approached, and he hastily rose to meet her.

"Welcome! welcome hame, Sir!" cried she; "an' sair, sair lookin' we have a' had for ye! But, oh! did ye find her?—hae ye seen my ain bairn?"

"Yes! yes, Janet, I've seen her!" replied he. "Heaven kens—and my disconsolate, mourning spirit kens—I *have* seen her! Yes, Janet, I have seen her! But, sit down—sit down. Hech, woman! it's been a lang journey, and a sad one. My voice by night has been like the troubled wind on the dark sea. Oh, Janet! ye may think my grief unreasonable, but mine was no common love—it was strong as the judgments o' eternity!"——

"Oh, Sir! Sir!" said Janet—"there's nane kens yer feelings better than I do—and nane, I'm sure, that has mair cause to mingle her tears o' mourning wi' yer lamentation; but, oh! my worthy friend and benefactor, in the midst fo our sorrow, let us remember the Hand that afflicts us, an not yield to sinfu' and profane language."

"Janet," said he, "when the very heartstrings are stangin' and writhin' round the oosom, like adders, the tongue canna wale the words. This may be a judgment upon me—for it wasna love—it was adoration!—an' though it may crush me to my grave, it's adoration still. Without her, an' my life is to live and feel death for ever! Death—wi' the last pangs o' life! Death—wi the horrors o' the grave! Death—wi' a' that's terrible hereafter!"

"Oh, my freend! my freend!" cried Janet, "if it be His will, may ye find peace and comfort to yer troubled spirit!"

"Peace an' comfort!" he exclaimed—"na! na!—naethin' upon this earth can now gie peace an' comfort to me, but the spade—the shool—the kirkyard! Talk o' peace an' comfort to the deein' traveller in the desert, wha has the burnin sand for a windin'-sheet, and the scorchin' wind to cool his parched tongue! But what's death in the wilderness, Janet to the desolation o' the soul!—what's the burning sand to the burnin' brain o' despair!—and what's the scorchin' wind an' the parched tongue, to the witherin' an' consumin' agony o' love without hope!—o' a heart dried up for ever! for ever!"

"Do try an' compose yersel', Sir," said Janet. "I wad fain ask a question or twa aboot my bairn; but while ye are in such agitation, I canna—I daurna. But, oh! how has she been? How did she get there? Is he good till her? An' whatfor did she no write?—or hae ye a letter? Has she no forgotten my counsel? Are his family guid to my bairn? Oh, Sir! try an' compose yersel' for a single minute, and answer me only that *one* question."

"Oh, Janet!" answered he, "dinna ask me, I implore ye, for I canna answer. My bein' there is like a dream—(for he had been to London in quest of her)—a painfu, painfu' dream! But I surely saw her—yes, I surely saw our ain Mary!—drooping like a snaw-drap, and fair as the alabaster! But I mind nae mair!—naethin'! naethin'!"

"Oh!" said Janet, "if it were the Lord's will that I might be permitted to see my dear bairn again!"

"Ye *shall* see her, Janet," said Mr Cuthbertson, calmly, and he rose and took her hand; "ye *shall* see her, Janet. I mind naething distinctly, but I fear I hae added affliction to the spirit I beheld sinking, an' that thocht is mair bitter to endure than a' my sorrows. I'm a lonely, friendless bein', wi' nane to share my griefs—nane to mourn for me. I had but one hope—one desire. It was buried here, Janet"—(and he laid his hand on his breast)—"it was buried here for years, and for years. The joys o' life, the melody o' existence, were locked up wi' its very bein'—but now it's gane—it's broken—it has perished, like the first sound o our infant voice!—and they're gane also. I hae but ae wish left, an' I will perform it. I will perform it. I will—I *must* see her again; an' you, Janet, shall accompany me."

A few days after this conversation, the family carriage, which had not been half-a-dozen times without the coach-house since the death of the former Mr Cuthbertson, was put in preparation for a journey. A footman took his seat behind; Janet was handed by the laird into the vehicle; and, after wishing good-bye to his household, he took his place by her side. None knew their destination, save that they took the English road, by way of Otterburn.

(*To be concluded.*)

WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE MINISTER'S DAUGHTER

(*Concluded.*)

With what success old Cuthbertson and Janet Gray pursued their inquiries in London, will be now seen. Mary began to be in want. With a trembling hand she took a watch—the gift of her father—from her neck. She gazed on it and wept. "It was thine! it was thine, my father!" she cried—"thy last gift to thy poor child! But forgive me!—my father, forgive thy Mary! It must be done!"

She was ignorant of its value; but trusting to the honesty of the world, and knowing it at least was worth more than what was required for immediate necessities, with an anxious and a throbbing heart she left her lodgings to offer it in pledge. Every step seemed leading her to something resembling guilt—to an action for which she blushed. Her soul appeared to shrink within itself; and her body moved onward with a consciousness of misery and of shame. Every eye in the passing crowds looked as if fixed upon her, and every eye in those crowds seemed to read her errand as she passed them. She was passing down Holborn, her eyes fell upon the words, "*Money lent.*" She stood still for a moment. The window was filled with every varied token of misfortune and dissipation, from the jewelled watch and wearing apparel down to the prayer-book; and the ancient arms of Lombardy were suspended from the door. Twice she essayed to enter, and resolution failed. In vain she wiped away the tears from her eyes, for others uncalled on took their place,

"I must! I must!" she murmured with a sigh; and yet a third time her hand was on the door, her foot upon the threshold.

"Guidness and mercy!" exclaimed a voice behind her—and an arm was suddenly thrown around her waist—"it is her! Janet! it's oor ain Mary!—oor angel Mary, snatched like a brand frae the burning! wi' her very feet upon the steps o' poverty an' disgrace, an' her han' on the door o' ruin! It's me, Mary, hinny!—it's me! an' here's yer ain Janet come to seek ye! But, oh, hinny! hinny! what in the earthly globe has driven ye to this?"

The speaker was Mr Cuthbertson. At the sudden sound of his voice, and at such a moment, Mary uttered one exclamation of confusion and surprise, and for a few seconds heard no more. She seemed launched, with the velocity of the lightning, from this world of realities to a state of dreams. She yielded almost unresisting to his arm, while his voice was like the murmur of water in her ears; and as her eyes beheld them, it was only a consciousness of perceiving a substance, without distinguishing the form.

"Oh, my Mary!—my bairn!" cried the old woman, throwing her arms round her neck, "hae ye no ae word to say to your ain Janet? My sweet, my winsome bairn! what's the meaning o' this?"

"Desperation and poverty, Janet!—desperation and poverty, Janet!" cried Mr Cuthbertson; "that's the meaning o' this! Waes me! what a pass!—that—no—no *my* Mary—but—but—but!—oh, Janet! that she should hae been starving, while we were wallowing in the land o' Goshen!"

"Starving!" exclaimed Janet—"Oh, sir! what do ye mean?—or hoo do ye ken? Speak to me—speak to me, my mair than bairn, or my heart will break!"

The strangeness of the scene, the stranger language, and broad Scottish accent of the speakers, had already collected a crowd around them, which, as Mary partially recovered from her agitation, tended to deepen her confusion.

"My kind, faithful Janet!" she replied, "this—this is a happiness I did not now expect!—and—and—Mr Cuthbertson, too!"——

"Ay! just Mr Cuthbertson!" interrupted he. "O Mary! Mary!—just Mr Cuthbertson!—little did I think ance to hear you ca' me"——

"Dinna talk o' that the now, sir," cried Janet; "for I'll declare, wi' ye talking about *starving*, ye have made me that I dinna ken what I'm doing already! What does he mean, my ain darling? Oh, tell me, noo that ye can speak. And hoo hae ye been?"

"Dear Janet," said Mary, "this is no place for explanations—the people are gathering round us, and it pains me"——

"I'll do naething to pain ye, my dawtie," added Janet; "sorry wad I be to do onything that could pain ye—ye ken that; but think to yoursel', is it no natural, that me that nursed ye—me that ate o' your faither's bread for thirty years—is it no natural"——

Here her voice failed—she sobbed, and again threw her arms round Mary's neck.

"Very true, Janet," said Mr Cuthbertson; "but think ye it's no mair natural for me, to"——

The crowd continued to increase, and were pressing around them.

"Dear friends," said Mary, "I cannot—I will not endure this. You know I do not feel less at this meeting than you; but you would not have us to become a spectacle and expose our feelings, and the circumstances of our family, on a public street. Be composed, dear Janet." She took Cuthbertson's hand—"Come, *brother*, I claim your protection."

"And ye shall hae it," replied he, kindly; "if I've said or dune onything amiss, only forgie me! For every now and then there's a mist comes owre my soul, and I hardly

ken whether the past's the present, or the present's the past, or hoo it is, or where I am. But ye'll forgie me, Mary."

"Name not forgiveness—I have nothing to forgive," she returned; "but let us leave this crowd."

"Crowd!—what crowd?" he inquired, with a look of stupidity; and turning round, only then became aware of the presence of some hundred individuals, whom he and Janet had drawn around them. "In the name o' wonder, folk!" he exclaimed, "what are ye a' gapin' an' starin' at? Is nature sic a stranger to yer breasts, that ye will stand glowrin' there like a wheen savages? Is this a specimen o' yer London manners?—awa we ye, every ane o' ye, an' look after yer ain business."

"Peace! peace, my friend!" said Mary; "let us leave them." And they proceeded towards her lodgings.

After they had sat for a time—"I must leave ye now," said Mary; "but I will return soon. You will not weary, Janet!"

"O bairn, just haud yer tongue," cried Janet, "for I'll gang wi' ye, though it were to the end o' the earth. Do ye think that I'll let ye out o' my sight already, an' ye no answered me ae question! I see ye are put about about something, an' ye winna tell me. How can ye be sae cruel? Wad I no lay down my life to serve ye? and ye ye'll no tell me—no ae word."

"Janet," said Mary, "when I return, you shall hear everything; at present I am compelled to leave you, but only for a few hours."

"Alas! alas!" replied Janet, "an' hae I come three, four, or I dinna ken how mony hunder miles, just to hear ye say—'Janet, I'm compelled to leave ye!' There's something wrang, I see that plainly—an ye winna tell me—me that carried ye in my arms"——

"No! no! dear Janet—nothing! nothing!" rejoined Mary; "all will be well. Good-by now, and I trust we shall not part again."

"No part again!" resumed the other, in a tone of delight; "do I hear my ain bairn say the words? Then I will let ye gang, but, oh, dinna bide an hour—dinna stay mony minutes—for if ye only kenned my anxiety, hinny, to ken hoo ye gat to Devonshire, as they ca' it—or what's brought ye here again, I'm sure ye wadna stay a single moment. An' bring Mr Walton wi' ye—noo, will ye promise to bring him, an' I'll just be happy?"

"I cannot, Janet!—I cannot!" said Mary, in accents of unconcealed anguish; "do not distress me."

"Ye canna!" exclaimed Janet, and sank back in her seat. "Sirs! sirs! what does my bairn mean?"

"I know your friendship," she replied, and trembling arose to depart; "but farewell now—I shall return shortly; yes—yes—I shall return soon."

Her manner was flurried, and expressive of inward struggling. Mr Cuthbertson arose, and sorrowfully but tranquilly walking towards her, took her hand within his, and said—"Stay, Mary!—stay! My Sister shall not go forth in sorrow. Yes, my Sister! You have called me Brother, an' henceforth the daughter o' my mair than faither, shall be to me a Sister, an' an only Sister. My brain was bewildered, an' it is often sae; but I heard something o' what was passin', an' I see the tear upon my sister's cheek—My Brother's no here! yes, my *Brother!*—my *Brother!* Thank God I've got the word past, an' I can say it again—my *brother Henry!*—an' noo, if I canna be *happy*, I shall be *composed*. If the sun o' joy winna shine upon me, I shall yet see the twilight o' consolation."

CHAPTER VIII.

"They parted—ne'er to meet again!
But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining.
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which have been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between,
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been."

It is now necessary, in concluding our story, to follow, for a brief space, the adventures of Sir Robert Walton and his friend Mr Northcott. It will be remembered that, on Henry Walton's return to Buckham Priory, he found his parents from home, and that he was left to ruminate, in the seat of his ancestors, on the eventful step he had taken, and the sorrows and trials which had followed up his marriage with Mary Robertson. The cause of the absence of his parents was, alas! unknown to him. During his sojourn in Scotland, Mr Northcott, a person of ruined fortunes, and of desperate character, having contrived to gain the ascendency over Sir Robert's mind, took occasion to cast suspicion upon the honour of his lady. The infamous slander too readily accomplished the villain's purpose. It wrought like madness in the brain of Sir Robert, and without asking for a single proof of Lady Walton's incontinency, he barbarously commanded her to leave the Priory; and, to complete the measure of his revenge, he ordered Northcott to prepare a deed of disinheritance against his own son, Henry Walton. Lady Walton, however, did not long survive the unfounded jealousy and brutality of her husband; she died in the course of a few weeks, of a broken heart—an innocent victim to his malign suspicions. Sir Robert himself, whose health for some time had been upon the wane, was ordered by his physician—a creature of Northcott's—to take a voyage to the Morea; and in compliance therewith, he embarked in company with the latter in a vessel bound for the Mediterranean. But its classic shores had for him no charms; he looked upon every object with apathy, and it was in vain that Northcott put forth all his eloquence and all his art in endeavouring to astonish and attract his attention, by the frequent boldness and beauty of the scenery. Sir Robert peevishly shook his head, and looked in a contrary direction. He laboured to ply him into humour with the bottle; the other drank, but remained sullen. They had been visited by storms, pursued by a French cruiser, and, to lighten the vessel, part of their cargo, water casks, and provisions, had been cast into the sea. Almost for the first time, Sir Robert had drank water, and that in measured quantities, granted only at intervals. He had felt there was a meaning in hunger, and had been denied a coarse biscuit until his next meal. He had been in terror of death—in fear of capture and imprisonment in a strange land—and, above all, a perpetual sea-sickness, or rather a murmuring of the disease, had for weeks been whispering about his heart, and he cursed the ship, the sea, his companion, and the hour that he left England, in the same breath.

His sleep grew disturbed and fevered, while the images of the past crowded upon his imagination. The voices of his wife and of his son spoke through his troubled slumbers; and to his locked up senses, frequently the flapping sail and the hollow wind shouted their upbraidings and accusations; and often would he start from his pillow, call upon their names, and vow to make atonement. As the voyage became more and more disagreeable, their remembrance swallowed up every other thought, and haunted him throughout the restless night, like a reviling spirit. Now the thought of his cruel injustice to Henry overwhelmed him with agony;

and, weeping as a child, he would cry aloud—"O Ha Hal!—what has my jealousy and madness brought upon thee?"

Again, the idea that he might be wandering as a beggar upon the earth, that he might have leagued himself with banditti, roused all the father in his bosom, and let loose nature's wildest anguish. Then would he picture his injured wife before him; and, to hide the vision from his sight, bury his face in the clothes that covered him, while he reddened with terror before the phantom which memory crushed upon his brain. He slept, but she was still present, and his conscience heard her wild reproaches.

Once awakening in frenzy from such a dream, he rushed to where Northcott slept, and grasping his throat, wildly exclaimed—"Speak, wretch! speak! Was it not thy doing? Was it not thou saidst Jess was unfaithful?"

"True, it was I," said Northcott, starting, but endeavouring to soothe him; "but why this foolish agitation? Pray, be calm."

"Be calm!" shouted Sir Robert; "dost think I will be dragged to perdition for thy sins? Dost think I will be tormented every night, and haunted by my Jess's spirit for doings of thine? Jess was my wife—the mother of my Hal! Canst thou deny it? Rise! rise, I tell thee!—for thou shalt not sleep while my soul is pursued by furies for thy actions."

"Away!" cried the other, fiercely, hoping to intimidate him; "am I a schoolboy to listen to these childish absurdities? Is this the return I am to receive for the love which I manifested towards you, in tearing you from the embrace of a wanton? Begone to thy *son!* and leave me for ever."

"And I *will* leave thee," said Sir Robert, relinquishing his grasp, "thou calm sinner! Were my foot upon land, I would leave thee. Where is thy love now?"

"Restraining my hand, Sir Robert," replied Northcott, 'that it is not raised to wipe out your insult and ingratitude."

'Thy hand!" cried Sir Robert. "Swinge! dost think I fear thy hand, or any man's hand! And hast not thou insulted me? Hast thou not called me jealous fool? Didst thou not tell the captain—didst thou not tell all the crew, not to mind me, for I was *mad!* And was that thy gratitude for the money I have lent thee?"

Northcott sprang up to reply, but the other turned away and ascended to the deck. Sir Robert's antipathy to continue the voyage increasing with its inconveniences and distance, and his headstrong and boisterous character breaking out into extravagance whenever thwarted, Northcott, fearing that he might prevail upon the captain to place him on board of some vessel bound for England, availed himself of the effect produced upon these occasions by his fierce and passionate manner, as a measure of safety to himself, to circulate a report of his occasional insanity. This baseness, on the part of Northcott, being afterwards repeated to Sir Robert, if it did not give him a glimpse of the real character and designs of his pretended friend, it widened the breach which the tardy belief that he had been bitterly deceived, and unsuspectingly betrayed to accompany him to a far distant land of barbarians, had created, and confirmed his determination not to proceed, but to return immediately to England.

It was near sunrise when Sir Robert ascended to the deck; the vessel was within a league of Malta, and bearing towards the land.

"What land be that, sir?" inquired he of a gentleman, who, in company with a lady, stood engaged in conversation with the helmsman.

"The island of Malta, sir," resumed the other.

"Zounds! Malta! Malta!" repeated Sir Robert. "Do take thee a boat and set me ashore," continued he, addressing the mate, "and I'll give thee a guinea for thy trouble."

"Thank your honour the same," replied the seaman, "but they may all go ashore who please in half-an-hour, for we must put in here."

"Dang! dost say so, lad?" cried Sir Robert; "thou shalt have a bottle of Burgundy for thy news."

The vessel had now anchored off the harbour; and, when the boat was lowered, Sir Robert, with the gentleman and his daughter, entered it, and were rowed toward the land.

"Give me thy hand, sir," said the baronet, turning round to the father of the young lady—"I hope you will not leave me. What excuse hast thou for going any farther? Let us ashore at this Malta, or what d'ye call it, and back to England as we best can."

"I give my hand," said Mr Palmerston—for such was the gentleman's surname—"in all friendship. It pains me that we must part; yet I have but two alternatives to choose between—to lose my newly acquired friend for a time, or my daughter for ever. It is true that her health appears improved, but you will forgive a father's fears; I cannot—I cannot already take her back to a country from which I have snatched her as from the grave."

"Tush, man!" exclaimed Sir Robert; "thou talkest of countries—our own country is the best of all countries, and the healthiest to boot. Dost tell me about curing consumptions abroad—I say, cure consumptions at home! Dost say—you must go to France, or go to Italy, or go on this wild-goose-chase of thine to cure them? I say—go to Wales, go to the Highlands of Scotland! Dost think there be any consumptions there?"

"Where there is nothing but an atmosphere of changes, and a sky of clouds, there must," said Mr Palmerston.

'Nonsense, man!" continued Sir Robert; "han't I been there? The atmosphere, as thee calls it, clips round thee like a hunter's coat; and, as for clouds, why, thou mayst live above them, if it suit thee best."

"Then we must indeed part from each other!" added the daughter of Mr Palmerston, with apparent solicitude and emotion.

"No, I tell thee, I won't part with thee, but I will go home with thee," resumed the other. "What! hast not suffered enough already, but thou must have us go among Turks or cannibals, to seek what we can find at home?"

"Go, Sir Robert," said Mr Palmerston. "and bear with you my esteem for sympathising with me in the affliction of my daughter; but as you find the voyage unpleasant, I have no right to expect you to continue it."

"'Sdeath!" returned Sir Robert, "I think thou art mad in good earnest, if thou art not as tired of this voyage as I am. Why this be nothing but a rock after all," continued he, rising in the boat as it neared Port Mahon, "and the town is a prison, for all that I see. Why, look ye, Miss Palmerston, love, if this be one of the islands thy father has come so far to seek health for thee in, thou mayest bless me that I am labouring to prevail upon him to turn back again."

She answered only with a sigh, and her breast heaved tumultuously.

"Zounds! duck, what dost sigh for?" he added; "I'm sure thou art glad that we shall return home again. Nay, now, I can't stand thy tears; I tell thee thy father shan't go, and thou shalt not go on board that vessel again."

They had been but two days upon the land, when the disease, which had taken deep root in the constitution of Elizabeth Palmerston, and which had been lying dormant during the voyage, began to develope itself with dreadful rapidity. Her father, finding himself on shore, yielded to the feeling of comfort and security which it inspired; and after his temporary privation, being surrounded with every delicacy to be found in the island, he began to feel the pleasures and the influence of sociality, and in a short time became the boon companion of Sir Robert.

"Thou shalt go to England with me, Palmerston," cried the baronet, in his one hand holding his, and in the other a glass. "Thy daughter shall not die—she shall live for Hal's sake—and never shall merrier party assemble together than that which shall meet within the hall of Buckham Priory to celebrate their nuptials. What! dost look sorrowful! I tell thee thy daughter shall be happy as the day is long, for I feel within my heart that I love her already better than her own father can, and why wilt thou stand in the way of her happiness?"

"My friend," said Palmerston, the words faltering on his tongue, "I have told you the declaration of the physician, that the life of my Elizabeth depended upon a change of climate, and residence abroad. I fondly would—but dare not return to Britain now. I cannot be the murderer of my daughter."

"'Sdeath! good sir, dost intend to tear my heart to pieces?" cried Sir Robert; "I tell thee we shall all go home together. I cannot leave thee. My Jess is lost to me eternally—Hal is lost to me; and all that I most fondly clung to has been wrenched from my grasp. Body-o'-me!" groaned he, in continuation, "art thou in earnest? Wilt leave me a prey to my own conscience—the victim of a villain who has flung deadly poison into my cup of enjoyment, and made me drink to the dregs. Never!—you shall not return on board. Thy daughter shall live—she shall reach our native land in safety and in peace; and when there, we shall find my poor Hal, who will bless me for my choice of his bride, and forgive his father for the barbarous wrong he intended him."

Palmerston was about to reply to the entreaties of his friend, when a messenger, dispatched by his daughter, intimated to him her wish to see him immediately.

"Is my daughter worse?" inquired Mr Palmerston eagerly; and without waiting an answer, he hurried from the scene of their carousal, followed by Sir Robert, to the apartment which she occupied in the house.

On entering the room they found her resting on a couch, and when her father approached her side she held out her hand cheerfully towards him, and begged, with a tremulous voice, that he would be comforted, as she had a strange feeling at her heart, which told her, she knew not how, that she would soon lay her head down in peace for ever.

"Don't say so, love," cried Sir Robert, stifling his emotion, "your father has agreed we shall all return to England, and for Hal's sake you shall not die—nay, if I should watch thee, child, with my own eyes, I tell thee thou shall not leave me."

She raised her eyes, in which were seen a strange unearthly fixedness, upon his countenance, stretched forth her pale transparent hand to him, and in accents half inarticulate with emotion, said—"You are kind, sir, but God does not will that I should participate in the happiness you intend for me. A few brief hours and the struggle shall be over. My poor father! I have but one petition—distract me not with your sorrow, nor suffer the only link that binds me to existence to be broken violently. I could have reposed a secret to your keeping—but it availeth not. I have seen *him* wasted with bitter remorse, and tortured with shame and agony of soul, who was the cause of the voiceless misery which laid the foundation of disease in my heart."

"Seen whom, my daughter?" exclaimed her father, raising her in his arms. "Speak! speak!—a few minutes more and it may be too late."

She raised her drooping head, and made an effort to articulate, but in vain; the sudden paleness that overspread her features told that her weary heart was at rest, and that her sorrows were buried with her for ever.

CHAPTER IX.

"The scene was changed, and years were fled,
But found them still to virtue wed:
And the cheerless months that had passed away,
Threw sunshine o'er each blissful day,
When fairest forms around them played,
And *father, mother*, fondly said;
For a parent's joy, and a parent's love,
Is a joy all other joys above!
And age drew on, but they knew it not,
The face of youth was half forgot;
But still the youthful heart was there,
And still his partner seemed as fair,
As when he first, in giddy bliss,
Snatched from her lips the virgin kiss."

Henry Walton, on receiving the letter from Mary, intimating her intention of leaving Scotland to share the fortunes of her husband, left Buckham Priory immediately, and proceeded by land to the north, in the hope of meeting his young wife. It was on the second morning after Henry's departure, that, as the coach on which he travelled passed through Morpeth, he was abruptly startled from the melancholy reverie into which he had fallen, by a stout countryman grasping him by the arm, and crying out—"My service to you, Maister Henry—I'll wager ye a mutchkin o' whisky ye're gaun down to Scotland to look after Miss Mary Robertson—I beg yer pardon—Mrs Walton, I mean."

"Tell me," said Henry, eagerly, "what you know of her."

"It canna be done in a breath, Maister Henry," replied the other; "but if ye'll just step down frae the coach, and walk wi' me owre to Lucky Gillie's, I'll answer for yer being weel ta'en wi', if that yer no blate to be seen wi' a rough drover.'

"Lead the way, and I will follow you," said Henry, jumping from the coach, and seizing the arm of his brawny companion; "but keep me not longer in this agony of suspense, if you esteem me, or regard the dear object of my search."

"Save us a', man! and do ye doubt for a moment either the one or the other," ejaculated the drover, while a tear forced its way down his cheek. "I've borne baith o' you on my heart ever since I was made acquaint wi' your privations

an' misfortunes, an' I dinna think ye hae reason to fear that ane o' the name o' Watson will ever forget what is due to the unfortunate."

Henry felt grieved that he should, in his anxiety to be put in possession of all that was known of his wife, have given pain to his warm-hearted and generous companion. He therefore turned round to the drover, with a look of emotion, and exclaimed—"Forgive me, my friend, for any expression of mine that may have given you uneasiness; let my anxious heart, and the tortured state of my feelings, be my apology—I am sorry for it."

"I can read that, Maister Henry, by the look o' yer een. But here's Lucky Gillie's house; stap in, sir, an' ye shall hear a' that I ken concerning Mrs Walton."

On entering the inn, they were shewn up stairs to an unoccupied room, and after the drover had broken up the fire, and seated himself in front of it, he jocosely turned round to his young friend, and laying his brawny hand upon his shoulder, said—"Be seated, Maister Henry—there's warse things than a guid fire in a cauld mornin'; I hope ye'll mak yersel at hame here—it's a friend's house; for, ye see, sir, auld Lucky Gillie's mither was the wife o' the Watson that fell at Culloden; an', though my faither an' her faither werna full brithers, they were faither's bairns but no mither's—yet I hae aye looked on Lucky an' mysel' as unco sib. Say the word, Maister Henry—it's what I like; shall we hae tongue—or ham—or baith? Faith, sir, it's a bad thing takin' unpleasant news, fresh an' fastin', intil an empty stamach in a raw morning—they're nae better than physic."

"Unpleasant news!" cried Henry, impatiently, rising from the chair where the hand of the other had half constrained him; "tell me, I pray you, where my poor wife is domiciled, and let me fly to her protection. Do not deceive me, nor torture me more by withholding from me your knowledge of her place of abode; for, if I am compelled to bear this agonising weight of suspense a few minutes longer, I shall be unfitted for the prosecution of my journey."

"Excuse me, Maister Henry," said the drover, soothingly, "I wad hae had ye first to hae broken yer fast; but, as yer impatient to hear a' that I ken aboot Mrs Walton, I'll just tell ye, to mak a lang story short, that I gaed on the coach frae Burnpath to Edinbro' wi' her, an' though I nadna the pleasure, for some time, o' kenning that my travelling companion was nane other than your young wife, I wasna lang in discovering that the gentle creature was unfriended, an' suffering under the weight o' sorrow an' distress. 'I ask yer pardon, leddy,' said I, when the coach stopped at the Black Bull; 'do ye think, ma'am, I could be o' ony service to ye.' She thanked me, an' seemed oppressed wi' the offer I had made her; but, withoot mair ado, I handed her frae the coach, pushed aside the caddy bodies, an' flung her trunk onto my ain shouther, an' trudged off wi' it to 'Brown Square,' to the house o' a Maister Lindsay, that's weel to do in the world, were it no that his wife an' twa o' her dochters hae gaen clean mad wi' pride. I'll no' deceive ye, Maister Henry; I was sae ta'en up aboot the way that Mrs Walton micht be received by her Edinbro' freends, that I cam up the next mornin' frae the Grassmarket, an' though I had naething on but my short grey-coat, leggums, an' double-soled shoon—just as ye see me the noo—I made bold to inquire after the comfort o' the dear young leddy at the house o' Mr Lindsay. When I knocked at the door, the impudent deevil o' a callant, that they ca' their footboy, geegled ootricht in my face; but I stalked intil the parlour, an' made my bow; an', in a short time, Mr Lindsay an' mysel'—for we were auld acquaintance—felt the spirit o' the past come owre us. We had glass after glass, to the happiness an' prosperity o' oor mutual freend, till oor hearts became actually drunk wi' joy. I perceived, in a minute, that Mr Lindsay treated the dochter o' his departed freend like his ain bairn; an' though his wife was a puir, feckless windlestrae o' a creature, an' his twa elder lasses mere buskit dolls, withoot either hearts or souls, yet I saw that the youngest ane was a leddy after Mrs Walton's ain heart; an' I was convinced that my dear young freend, frae the liking that I discovered had sprung up between her an' Misses Lindsay, an' frae a' that I kent o' Mr Lindsay, wad feel hersel at ease in his house."

"Did you inform Mary that you had met with me," inquired Henry, half choked with grief; "I hope in God you did not add my sorrows to her own!"

"It was far frae me to think o' doin' the like," replied the drover. "I merely hinted, in a cautious an' becoming manner, Maister Henry, that I had the honour—God kens hoo undeserved—o' being a wee bit familiar wi' her worthy husband, an' I gaed on to mention a circumstance or twa connected wi' yer respected faither—Sir Robert Walton o' Devonshire—naething to his disparagement, sir; but just sic as the price o' his Arawbian mare, his great connexions, an' the like; yet, instead o' Mrs Walton appearing uplifted wi' the thocht o' being the wife o' a baronet's son, she only answered me wi' a dejected melancholy smile, an' seemed to be completely miserable at the very idea o' the grandeur that awaited her."

"And does she still reside in the house of her father's friend?" inquired Henry, taking his hat in his hand, and evincing a disposition to proceed immediately on his journey.

"It's mair than I can say," answered the drover, "but we shall soon ascertain, Maister Henry; for, if ye'll stop or I get my business dune, we can tak the afternoon coach, an' drive straight through to Brown Square, withoot mair ado."

Henry felt too unhappy to be able to embrace the kind proposal of his companion; and, after snatching a hasty breakfast, he bade his friend farewell, and posted off in a chaise for Edinburgh. He travelled all night, and a little after daybreak, the next morning, he found himself in the Scottish capital, long before the stir and bustle of life was heard in the streets. He silently bent his course to Brown Square, and hastily running over the brass plates attached to the doors of the more respectable of the houses, his eyes at last fell upon the name of Mr Lindsay. It was too early to disturb the inmates, but the thought that Mary was within, acted as a spell upon his heart, and he had not the power to take himself from the Square. He walked to and fro in front of Mr Lindsay's dwelling, and ever and anon, as he examined the movements of his watch, he blamed the wearisome length of the hours, and became half convinced in his perturbation of mind, that time was lagging in its course. A servant at length opened the door, when Henry stepped up to her, and inquired if he could see Mr Lindsay.

"It's far owre sune to see the maister, sir," answered the girl; "he'll no be doun frae his room for a guid hour yet."

"But could you not find means to let him know," said Henry, earnestly, "that a gentleman wishes to see him on matters of the greatest moment?"

"It's mair than my place is worth, sir," replied the servant, with a low curtsy; "but, if ye wad leave yer name, I can gied intil the maister when I tak in the breakfast."

"Stop, my good girl," cried Henry, slipping a piece of silver into her hand, "perhaps you can inform me if Mrs Walton is one of your visiters."

"That wad be the young leddy, sir, wi' the bright hair," ejaculated the servant, "that the maister used to ca' *his angel!* Na, na, sir, she's no here now; she took shipping at Leith, and gaed awa some weeks sin' syne, to seek out some o' her braw friends in Lunnun. There's naebody visiting here the now, but the upstart Dawsons o' the Grass-market, that carried on the butchin."

Henry, speechless and trembling with emotion, rushed from the girl's presence and proceeded through the streets, gazing frantiely upon every one he met, till arriving at the inn where he first alighted in the morning, he flung himself down in a paroxysm of most impatient agony, exclaiming, under the bitterness of disappointment, and the overwhelming impetuosity of his feelings—"My wife!—my Mary!—where—where shall I find her?"

Leaving Henry to retrace his steps from Edinburgh to Buckham Priory, we introduce the reader once more to Mr Cuthbertson, Janet, and Mrs Walton. It was in vain that the latter attempted to steal from their presence and to go in search of Henry; for Janet, now that she had found her whom she would willingly have laid down her life to serve, was determined that her "dear bairn," as she familiarly termed Mary, should no longer be subjected to the privations and misery she had so long endured.

"O bairn!" cried Janet, on Mary's importuning her again to be allowed to leave her and Mr Cuthbertson for a few hours—"yer miserable and restless as a house-bird, which, escaped from its cage, breaks its wings and its heart thegither, as it flutters without aim and without rest, frae place to place. I canna think o' parting wi' my winsome bairn; but if she'll tell me what's gaen wrang wi' her, I'll travel to the ends o' the yearth to get back her peace and her happiness."

"My kind, affectionate Janet," replied Mary, "be calm—all will be well. My poor, dear father has often told me to submit in all things to His will who bringeth good out of apparent evil: let us hope, then, that the successive misfortunes which have so long chequered the scenery of my life are drawing to a close, and that a better fortune awaits me."

"Dear sister," said Mr Cuthbertson, enclosing the hand of Mary in his own, "let us proceed to Devonshire instantly, and from the domestics o' Buckham Priory we may learn some intelligence o' Maister Henry."

"I know your goodness," replied Mary, wiping away the tears from her eyes, "and could you be instrumental in bringing me into the presence of my Henry, the blessing of heaven, and the lasting gratitude of a breaking and disconsolate heart, shall be your meed of reward."

"Talk not o' reward," said Mr Cuthbertson sorrowfully.

"Na! na! my dawtie!" ejaculated Janet, "we're owre glad we hae found you; an' what would we no do for you an' Maister Walton? In troth, my bairn, if he's no at hame—or if his folk dinna shew ye that kindness your winsome innocence deserves—will ye promise, Mary, an' I'll just be content, to return for guid an' a' in the family carriage to Cuthbertson Lodge, an' bring Maister Henry alang wi' you?"

"Return, Janet!" cried Mary, struggling to suppress her emotion, "in my husband is bound up my happiness or misery; with him I could enjoy the sunshine of prosperity, or welcome the long night of penury and wo; nor could the destruction of my heart's last hope draw one murmur from my lips, or throw one shadow over my brow, to tell my Henry of an inward pang."

On the following morning, as Mr Cuthbertson, in company with Mary and Janet, were setting off for Buckham Priory, they were unexpectedly startled by a person thrusting his hand into the carriage window, and exclaiming—"Heaven preserve us!—do I dream? or is this a delusion? I darna believe my een! Speak! young leddy, were it but ae word. Are ye no the minister's daughter o' Burnpath—the wife o' Henry Walton?"

Mary uttered a loud shriek, and fell back in a swoon; but when she recovered she found herself supported in the arms of her husband, who had for some days, with the honest drover for his companion, been prosecuting his inquiries through London, in the hope of meeting with his wife. Their meeting may be more easily conceived than described. Henry and Mary wept through excess of happiness, but their tears were gilded with the smiles of hope and of bliss, and their past sufferings were swallowed up in the joyful anticipations of the future. Every facility was speedily afforded by Mr Cuthbertson, in order that Henry and his young wife might appear at Buckham Priory in a manner suiting their station. His family carriage was laid under contribution, and in a few hours the whole party left London for Devonshire. It may be here necessary to mention that Sir Robert Walton had arrived in England but a few weeks previous to this event, in restored health, from the island of Malta. On reaching his seat, his first care was to destroy the instrument that robbed his son; and he now strove to wipe off the injury he had intended him, by regarding Henry with that overweaning partiality which a doting father, in the decline of his years, is apt to manifest towards an only child. Henry had at once acknowledged his marriage to his father, and the latter was now, in pride and fondness, anxiously longing to welcome his daughter. The arrival of the party at Buckham Priory soon afforded him that joy. Every eye was contagious of felicity—every breast glowed with transport.

"Bless thee for thy choice, Hal!" exclaimed Sir Robert gazing with a look of pride alternately on both. "Thou art father's own son! Thou hast given me the loveliest daughter in all England! And bless thee, too, my own best child," he added turning to Mary; "thou shalt be happy as the day is long. Thou shalt be mistress of my house, and not even thy own Hal shall contradict thee; and I will settle a portion upon thee myself."

"Excuse me, sir," said Mr Cuthbertson, "but my sister needs nae portion; why I call her sister ye will learn hereafter. I, sir, have been a lonely man, and a miserable man, like a planet driven frae the universe, and plunging in deeper darkness through a' eternity. But comfort has at last stolen owre my spirit, as an infant fa's asleep to the lullaby o' its mother; and joy has broken again upon my head, like the first dawning o' a summer morning. I have a right, sir, to make reparation to your son and to my sister, for I have been (though innocently) the author o' a deal o' their afflictions; and at this happy meeting, if ony o' ye feel mair joy than me, there are none o' ye feel a holier satisfaction. Henry," he added, "did the poor petition which ye wad see in the pocket-book I left wi' ye, before I gaed to Scotland, meet your approbation?"

The pocket-book was still unopened, and Henry offered to return it, expressing the depth of his gratitude, and stating that he had not looked on its contents. "Keep it!

keep it!" exclaimed the other, 'ye will there find a copy o' the instrument which conveys my sister's portion."

It was in fact a copy of his will, bequeathing to her and her heirs, the estate of Cuthbertson Lodge, together with a thousand pounds, payable immediately by a banker in London.

Months of unmingled joy rolled over the party before they left the Priory. Sir Robert was about to enter proceedings against Northcott, when intelligence arrived that that disgrace of humanity had, by self-destruction, avoided a more public, though not more disgraceful, death.

Mary was a mother; and the sole delight of Mr Cuthbertson was to act as preceptor to her children. He became at once their guardian and playmate, entering with the simplicity of a child into all their sports. The desolation of heart, of which he had been the victim, became like a half-remembered dream, or an autumnal storm that had passed away, and left the mellow beams of a setting sun to throw their softened light upon the plain. He never again parted from his friends, but remained with them in Devonshire, and every summer accompanied them to his own estate in Roxburghshire.

Old Janet lived to behold "her bairn's" bairns, virtuous as their mother; and as age drew on, Sir Robert vowed he felt younger and happier every day. Henry and Mary made several visits to Burnpath, and caused a cottage to be built for the helpless old widow, in whose ruined hovel they had met upon the moors, and with whom Henry had left his purse. Thirty years have passed over their wedded lives, and on them middle age has descended imperceptibly, as the calm twilight of a lovely evening, when the stars steal out, and the sunbeams die away; as a holy stillness glides through the air, like the soft breathings of an angel, unfolding from his celestial wings the rosy curtains of a summer night; and the conscious earth, kissed by the balmy spirit, dreams and smiles, and smiling dreams itself into the arms of night and of repose. Mary has lost somewhat of her sylph-like form, and Henry his elasticity of step, but they have become middle-aged together. They have half-forgotten the likeness of the face of their youth, yet still the *heart* of youth, with its imperishable affections and esteem, throbs in either bosom, smiling calmly upon time and its ravages; and still in the eyes of Henry his partner seems as young, as fair, and as beautiful, as when, in the noon-tide of her loveliness, she blushing vowed to be his upon his bosom. Their children have arisen around them and called them blessed, and they have beheld those children esteemed and honoured in society. Mary has taught Henry that virtue is always young, and that there is no true virtue which has not religion for its source; and Henry, in return, has taught Mary that "in the husband he has not forgot that he is still her lover."

TO READERS.

It is our painful duty to send around the land the tidings of the lamented death of Mr John Mackay Wilson, the Author of these Tales. This event has come upon us at an hour when, in truth, "we looked not for it." That grim messenger, whose afflicting visits he has so often affectingly described, has borne his irresistible demand upon him —thrown the gloom of desolation over the bright scene that was expanding before his eyes—and left, in darkness and in sorrow. his bereaved and afflicted friends.

The event which we thus deplore, took place on the morning of the 2d instant. Thirty-one short years only had rolled over him in this vale of tears. His sun had not yet gained its meridian splendour, when the dark cloud of death overshadowed him, and has left us to look after him in sadness across that bourn from which no traveller ever returns.

His early days were spent in peace and happiness under his parental roof, and were marked by a kind of native thirst after knowledge. His tasks, when at school, were a mere pastime and pleasure to him; and when he arrived at those years when young men make choice of a profession in life, he fixed upon that of a Printer. This threw him, as it were, into a situation where he had an opportunity of drinking at the streams of human knowledge that passed by him. Naturally fond of literary pursuits, he soon exhausted his scanty means of gratifying his taste in Berwick-on-Tweed, and leaving the home of his childhood, and the scenes of his early days, his aspiring spirit carried him to London, to quench its thirst for knowledge and for fame at those deeper and purer streams that flow so copiously in the British Metropolis. But, like many an aspiring and inexperienced youth, he did not seem to calculate on the fact, that those streams, which in their warm fancy "heal disease and soften pain," are within doors which golden keys alone can open. Difficulties and hardships, not a few, pressed hard upon him; and some of the most touching descriptions in the Border Tales of sufferings endured by the aspirant for fame, were actually endured by himself; and, though under a fictitious name, the sobs and tears which involuntarily burst from the family circle when these tales were read, were poured forth for him whose pen had described them. Often, amid the wealth and gaiety of London, has he wandered homeless and friendless; but all the waters of affliction through which he passed could not repress the ardour of his spirit, or quench his thirst for fame.

Far in the distance of years, and through a rugged and difficult pathway, where many a storm raged and many a dark and heavy cloud floated, he looked steadily onward to the object of his ambition. Despair seemed an entire stranger to him; and the strength of his own mind stayed him amid darkness and amid tempests. Disappointment and poverty did indeed drive him away from the British Metropolis, and he was forced to seek in the provinces what he could not find there—nor did he do so in vain; for, as the public prints often stated, his eloquence was admired, and his toils were softened by the approbation of thousands of his countrymen. But, amid the adulation that he met with,

stern penury was still his companion. If he was reaping 'a golden harvest of opinions," it was often with him as it had been with many illustrious literary men before him, he had scarcely wherewithal to satisfy the cravings of nature. This did indeed make inroad upon his constitution, and sowed the seeds of that disease which at last carried him away from us, but could not check the flights of his spirit onward to happier and more prosperous days; and, though the darkness which hung around him, seemed to move but tardily away, it did pass, and the sun of prosperity shot out from amidst it, and promised a rich reward for his literary privations and toils. But, alas! how uncertain are all earthly things! Scarcely had that sun burst through the clouds which had so long concealed it—scarcely had his bosom been warmed with this hope, and scarcely had he prostrated his antagonist, Privation, when Death laid his arrest upon him, and terminated for ever all his earthly enterprises.

During his sojourn in Edinburgh in 1829 he wrote, at the suggestion of a gentleman of high literary eminence in that city, a melo-drama entitled, "The Gowrie Conspiracy." The favourable reception which this piece met with upon the stage prompted him to write two more dramatic compositions, which were announced by the names of "The Highland Widow" and "Margaret of Anjou." He finished, at the same period, "The Sojourner," a Poem of considerable length, in the Spenserian stanza but not being able to meet with a publisher, he commenced writing his 'Lectures on Poetry," with "Biographical and Individual Sketches," which he completed in three manuscript volumes. These lectures he continued to deliver, with various success, in the principal towns of Scotland and England, till, about three years ago, he rested from his wanderings in his native village, among his friends and early associates, in consequence of being invited to become editor of the *Berwick Advertiser*, a provincial newspaper. Here his employment was congenial to his taste. He threw his whole soul into his work, and lent his unwearied efforts to promote what he considered his "country's weal." His spirit flashed with indignation at the thought either of public or of private oppression, and he sought, with warmest zeal, to advance the interests of his native place. But, amid his labours as an editor, his spirit still delighted to dwell in the fields of literature, and the matter of the journal was often diversified by his own poetical and literary effusions.

He published too, last summer, as most of the readers of the Border Tales will know, a Poem entitled "The Enthusiast" with other poetical pieces, and regarding which the public have pronounced a favourable opinion. But that which wafted his fame throughout the length and breadth of his native land, as well as bore it to distant climes, was his Border Tales. It was from these, too, that he and his friends saw a prospect of a reward for his toils. Their circulation was beyond even his own most sanguine expectations, and the remuneration from them such as would soon have placed him in independent circumstances. But the scene which was thus opening before him has been blighted—and from the high place which he had gained in the estimation of his townsmen, from the caresses of his friends, and from the reproaches of his foes, he now lies where the "wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest."

This short narrative of the man who has often amused and thrilled the readers of the Border Tales, may affect nay, must affect, all who read it; but it will be laid aside, and he may be forgotten: but there are some from whose remembrance he will never fade, till they rest with him in the lonely churchyard. Death alone will dry up the tears which bedew a mother's and a widow's cheeks, or suppress the sigh of their wounded hearts. Fast, fast in the remembrance of those who "watched o'er his childhood," and those who surrounded with him the family hearth, has he intrenched his name and his memory; and in their behalf would we bespeak the sympathy of those who were edified by his stories or pleased with his fancy. But most of all do we bespeak their sympathy in behalf of her who "shared his sorrows through many a changing year." He has left a widow respectable and respected; and, from what we have said of his struggles through many a dark year, she is left to depend on the profits of his works for the comforts necessary for her, till she sink to rest with him in the grave. Nor are her prospects dark, if those who cheered him on in his literary labours still stand by her. His materials are not yet exhausted, and "tales yet untold" are in reserve, to keep alive his memory, and to soothe, as far as earthly comforts can, her widowed heart. Already streams of sympathy flow in upon her, bearing offers of kindness; and under the management of Mr James Wilson, her brother-in-law, and Mr Sutherland, 12, Calton Street, Edinburgh, who is now publisher, we trust to see her reap the full reward of his genius and toils whose last hours she sweetened, and whose departing spirit she soothed, by the most unwearied attention and affectionate kindness.



WILSONS

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

COLDINGHAM ABBEY;

OR,

THE DOUBLE REVENGE.

Most of our readers, we dare venture to say, have either heard or read of Coldingham Abbey; but, for the enlightenment of such as may not, we may be permitted to add, that for several centuries it continued to be one of the most famed and opulent of the many religious houses with which Scotland was studded. There are hoary chroniclers who tell how, many long years ago, the Saxon Princess Ebba, sister of Osway, King of Northumbria, was obliged to flee from the dangers with which her father's kingdom was distracted—how she embarked in a boat which she found lying at the mouth of the Humber—and how her frail skiff, destitute of oar or rudder, bent its way over the turbulent billows, till it landed her in safety on a sandy beach on the coast of Berwickshire, a little eastward from where St Abb's, in giant greatness, now rears his venerable head above the waves. The same veritable authorities record how the priests who officiated in a lonely temple, which, like the eyry of the eagle, was perched upon the summit of that stupendous cliff, looking forth upon the stormy ocean, descried with astonishment and awe the little boat bounding triumphantly over the billows which threatened every moment to engulph it in their watery abyss; and how the princess, filled with gratitude to Him,

"Who rules the whirlwind and directs the storm,"

piously resolved to dedicate to His service the remainder of her life and fortune, and thus became the foundress of Coldingham Abbey. Time would fail us were we to enumerate the enormities which were carried on by the inmates of this religious establishment after the death of the sainted Ebba; nor shall we detain the reader by telling him how the Deity, grievously incensed at the turpitude and extent of their delinquencies, commissioned a fleet of Scandinavian rovers to land upon the neighbouring coast, and consume the monastery and its wicked inhabitants in one common conflagration; and how it lay in ruins for about two hundred years thereafter, a monument of Divine retribution. In the year 1098, King Edgar of Scotland caused a much more splendid edifice to be reared upon its foundations. According to worthy Andrew Winton's veracious "Chronykil"—

"Coldyngham then founded he,
And rychely gart it dowit be;
To Cuthbert, Ebb, and Mary baith,
This haly kirk he dedecate."

Therein he planted a colony of Benedictine monks from Durham, whence, at various times thereafter, it continued to be supplied. These worthy ecclesiastics and their successors, at the same time that they made spiritual affairs their profession, were by no means deficient in their regard to what was considered to be of tantamount importance—the levying of sufficient supplies for the due support of their monastery. In short, like the brethren of a neighbouring Border convent, the monks of Coldingham

"Made gude kail
On Fridays when they fasted;
Nor wanted either beef or ale,
As lang as their neighbours' lasted."

Unlike the graver churchmen of modern times, they engaged eagerly in the sports of the chase. Starting forth from their cells by break of day, they pursued the startled deer from his covert in the woods which sheltered the beautiful valley of the Eye; and, when the chase was over, planted in triumph his antlered head upon the festive board of the refectory. Then, crowding around it, they qualified their venison with liquor from goblets which mantled high with the pure and unadulterated juice of the grape; and concluded the business of the day amid the din of "wassail, rout, and revelry."

Now, it happened about the middle of the fifteenth century, that there sprung up the powerful and warlike clan of the Homes, who soon became proprietors of many estates adjacent to the abbey lands, and exercised the authority of more than Border barons over the persons and property of the greater part of the inhabitants of what were called the Eastern Marches. They soon began to cast invidious eyes upon the rich possessions of the monks; and, a favourable opportunity having at length occurred, they succeeded in getting one of their family installed into the lucrative office of Bailiff to the Priory. From that period they began gradually to encroach upon the power of the other officials, and to appropriate the revenues to the furtherance of their own ambitious schemes; so that the persons of the poor monks, once plump and rosy "with good capon lined," dwindled down to be the very ghosts of what they were, by reason of the scanty manner in which their larder was supplied. About the year of grace 1487, the king formed the design of applying the revenues to the support of a splendid chapel-royal which he had recently erected at Stirling—a proposal which, if it had been carried into effect, would have for ever blasted the selfish views of the usurping Homes. They, however, resolved not to be so easily forced to relinquish that which they had been in the habit of considering as their own; and, forthwith rallying their vassals around them, and contemptuously unfurling their banners upon the battlements of Fast Castle, Wedderburn, and Dunglass, they impetuously rushed into that rebellion which cost the king his life. His gallant son, James the Fourth, though certainly indebted to them for his premature elevation to the throne, when calmly seated there, and left to meditate at leisure upon the odious means by which he had attained it, cherished such an inveterate hatred against them, that, while he lived, he would not allow a single member of the family to hold office within the abbey. The fall of Prior Stuart at Flodden, by the side of his ill-fated father, the king, created a vacancy, however, which the Homes, at all hazards, resolved upon filling up, by installing their kinsman, David Home, a younger brother of their chieftain, into the Prior-

ship. The Regent Albany sought in vain an excuse for subjecting him to the same bloody fate as his two brothers had experienced soon after his accession to office; though he gave large bribes to Hepburn, the chieftain of Hailes, and others, with whom he knew him to be at enmity, to find out some way of privately assassinating him. This horrid crime they found it by no means so easy to accomplish. The Prior, aware of Albany's machinations against him, seldom ventured abroad beyond the precincts of the monastery, and then only when attended by a numerous escort of armed Borderers. His time was, for the most part, devoted to the study of the sciences of astrology and necromancy—if, indeed, we may be allowed to dignify with the name of science, systems which were based in ignorance and superstition.

It chanced one day, about the middle of March 1518, that the Prior, having had occasion to make a short excursion from the monastery, was returning homeward with his escort over a moor that lay to the westward of the Priory, when their attention was attracted by the body of a man, lying stretched on his back upon the heath. He appeared to be perfectly insensible, and only replied to the questions which were put to him by uttering frequent and deep groans. He seemed to be about the middle age, and was dressed in the garb of a mendicant, though there was something in his general appearance that seemed to indicate that he had not been long, at least, reduced to the necessity of following that abject calling.

"Manderston," said the Prior, addressing one of the most athletic of the horsemen, who had dismounted to inspect the body of the mendicant, "do you see to get the poor wretch placed upon a litter, and conveyed with as much ease as may be to the Priory, whither some of us shall ride on before, and instruct Father Benedict to get such medicaments prepared as he may deem most meet for his restoration."

Having given these instructions, the Prior clapt spurs to his steed, and speedily arrived with a few of his retinue in the courtyard of the Abbey. He was just on the point of entering into the cloisters, when he felt himself suddenly pulled by the skirt of his riding cloak. On turning round, he discovered standing behind him an old man, who usually formed part of his escort, the rueful aspect of whose countenance made him look like one who knew himself to be the bearer of tidings which he considered might be far from agreeable.

"What aileth you now, Lumsdean?" said the Prior, scarcely able to repress a smile at the tragi-comic expression of the veteran's features; "you look liker a man who has made up his mind to go to the gibbet, than a bluff, fearnought Borderer, as you have heretofore proved yourself."

"Pardon me, my Lord Prior," replied the other; 'but I like not thy bringing hither yonder stranger for a guest. I doubt much, if mine eyes deceive me not, that he is something mair than a gaberlunzie, albeit he weareth the dress o' ane; and that, I dree, 'ill be ower sune kend, to the sorrow of mony, gin you'll no let me gang immediately to gie directions that he is no to be brought within these walls."

"Why, Lumsdean," rejoined the other, "you seem to have become dotard, old fool; your language is shrouded in greater mystery than are the writings of many of my old necromantic authors; and Heaven knows many of them are sufficiently obscure. Explain yourself quickly, and detain me not; otherwise his life, be he mendicant or merely babbler, like yourself, will be lost for want of timeous assistance."

"Call me dotard, or babbler, or worse, an thou list, my liege; but I may not forbear to warn thee against him. Thou knowest James Hepburn, the chieftain of Hailes, and what thou hast to expect should thou and he happen to forether: for he hath vowed that Scotland shall not long hand you baith till he be revenged upon thee. Under the gaberlunzie garb, thou didst behold that chieftain. I once saw him, in cold blood, stab one of his ain henchmen; and, since that time, his appearance hath been rivetted upon my mind."

"Get you to your dormitory, old fool, and try what effect a little sleep may lend you in quieting your diseased imaginings," interrupted the Prior, impatiently, and immediately disappeared through a small Saxon archway that led into the cloisters. He soon introduced himself into a small apartment, little more than six feet square, dingily lighted by a small circular aperture in the roof. In it sat Father Benedict, at a table covered with old musty parchments, and huge, moth-eaten volumes closed with iron clasps. Though he did not exceed forty-five years of age, his bald head truly indicated that those hours which the other members of the fraternity devoted to recreation and slumber, were by him spent in study and nocturnal vigils. Underneath a set of bushy grey eyebrows gleamed two dark, penetrating eyes, betokening the superior share of intellectual acuteness which their owner possessed. His craft, and insinuating manners, had often proved efficient to the Homes in quelling the dissensions which not unfrequently broke out among the monks during that turbulent age. He arose from his seat and made the customary obeisance as the Prior entered; and, on being apprised of the object of his visit, he proceeded, with great complaisance, to remove from an oaken chest various bottles, containing liquors of different colours, the names and virtues of which he explained to the Prior as he set them carefully down upon the table. At length, he produced one considerably larger than the others, and, holding it up with great satisfaction before the Prior's face—

"This containeth," said he, "one of the best elixirs in my pharmacopia. 'Tis the discovery of Henry de Gretham, a brother monk of Durham, who happening, some years bygone, to be sent hither on secular business, imparted unto me the valued secret of its composition. It is by far the best of my medicaments—the Elixir Elixorum, as I might call it. When Abbot Forman presided in this house, it never failed to bring him forth out of those fits of stupor whereunto he oftentimes fell towards nightfall; and I doubt not but it will prove equally efficacious unto the varlet whom thou foundest lying senseless upon the moor."

While he spoke, a noise was heard at the entrance to the cloisters. It was speedily followed by a knocking at the door of Benedict's apartment, from the exterior of which an announcement was made that the sick man had been deposited in the hospital.* Thither Father Benedict now hastened, with all due despatch, to exercise his Esculapian skill, not forgetting to carry with him his favourite sanatory elixir. Nor did the result shew that his estimation of its virtues had been over-highly rated; for, ere the vesper bell had rung, his patient had so far recovered as to be able to complain of a sense of suffocation, which led him to request that the casement of the window might be thrown open, to admit the fresh air. From that time, he rallied so fast that the monk, deeming it unnecessary to attend upon him longer, locked the door, and left him to compose himself for the night.

On leaving the apartment of Father Benedict, the prior proceeded through the gardens of the monastery, towards a private door, by which he was in the habit of gaining access to the apartment in which he prosecuted his singular studies; but, finding that the key was amissing, he was forced to retrace his steps, and enter by the principal door,

* There was an hospital or infirmary attached to almost the whol of the monasteries, the superintendence of which was entrusted to on of the monks. The Abbey of Coldingham had two: one of which stood within its precincts, adjoining to the cloisters—the other, being a few miles westward, at Auldcambus, was devoted exclusively to the recep tion of lepers.



COLDINGHAM ABBEY.

which opened upon the court-yard. His flambeau being lighted, he sat himself down in his vaulted chamber, the walls of which were lined with shelves of books and ancient portraits of eminent ecclesiastics and warriors. Immediately opposite to him hung two paintings, of much more modern date—the likenesses of his two unfortunate brothers, whom the miscreant Albany had brought to the block on the 16th of October of the preceding year. Suddenly looking upwards, his eye fell upon those frail relics, which were now the sole memorials of his beloved kindred; and his heart beat quick, and the tear darted to his eye, as he figured to himself those once smiling countenances, now fixed, with the heads of traitors, upon the battlements of Edinburgh. He reflected, too, that the same sanguinary measures would be doled out to himself, should a fitting opportunity occur of inveigling him into their snares; and then, for the first time, did he bestow a serious thought upon the warning of the stranger invalid, and almost repented of having allowed him to be brought so near him. Still he did not see, for the present, how any evil could accrue to him from one apparently so much indisposed. He resolved, however, to have him dismissed from the monastery as soon as he should appear to have recovered sufficient strength to admit of his being removed. He continued to revolve these matters over in his mind till the gloomy hour of midnight approached. Before retiring to his couch he thought of trying that celebrated experiment in the occult sciences, by which it was deemed possible to determine the exact duration of an individual's life; and he resolved that his own should be the subject of the experiment. He accordingly proceeded to arrange upon the table a variety of glasses and instruments considered necessary to its successful performance, and to describe numerous large circles upon some sheets of parchment that were spread out before him.

Having concluded these preparatory arrangements, he passed his hand across his brow, and said aloud to himself—

"I shall now see how many years have yet to revolve ere this head of mine shall be gathered together with those of my loved relatives, who have gone before me."

"Thou mayst e'en spare thyself that trouble, my Lord Prior," exclaimed a voice from behind him; "all thy years have already revolved, and few, indeed, are the sand-grains in thy glass that have yet to run out. Knowing this, I deemed it meet to come and thank thee for the service thou hast shewn me during the term of thy brief existence."

Ere these words had been repeated, the Prior had started to the middle of the floor, and found them to proceed from the mendicant, who had got admittance by the private door, the key of which he had lost, and upon whose face played a smile of the most diabolical import. On recovering somewhat from the surprise into which so unexpected a visiter had thrown him, the Prior thus broke forth:—

"How, knave, durst you venture to intrude yourself thus stealthily into my private apartment, and at such an hour?" and, at the same time, he hurried to the spot where the man stood, in search of his rapier. The latter now burst out into a fiendish laugh, and throwing aside his cloak, and tossing off the mendicant's cowl, with which his face had previously been in a great measure concealed, he instantly discovered himself to be Hepburn, the chieftain of Hailes, from whom the Prior had so much to dread.

"What seekest thou, my Lord Prior?" said he, "perchance thy rapier?—here it is—I found it lying by thy side, and a goodly piece of workmanship I warrant it to be. I shall restore it to thee presently; but, first, pray let me ask thee if thou knowest one James Hepburn, who, but for thee, would now have held the Priorate of this Abbey, and whom thy traitor-brother, Lord Home, did so much to injure?"

"Too well I've known you, base villain," replied the Prior; "and had my brother lived, you would, ere this, have been made to pay the penalty of your crimes. My kinsman, David of Wedderburn, may yet let thee feel what it is to insult a Home." *

"Then let me tell thee, Home," said Hepburn, brandishing the rapier, and his eyes sparkling with the fury of a demon, "I've sought thee long, by night and by day, in the wilderness and in the city; but could nowhere find thee out, to wreak my vengeance on thy head. I have, however, in the garb of a mendicant feigning sickness, gained access to thee, and now receive back thy rapier;" so saying, he plunged the weapon into the heart of the Prior, who instantly reeled backward and expired with a deep groan.

The tidings of this deplorable event soon spread far and wide over the country; but the assassin remained undiscovered, nor was it known for some time afterwards who was the perpetrator of the horrid deed. The ruffian, Hepburn, returned to court, where the Regent readily agreed to appoint his kinsman, Robert Blackadder, to the vacant Priorship; and, accordingly, the Archbishop of St Andrew's, within whose diocese the Abbey stood, appointed the fifth day of October following for the performance of the ceremony of instalment. No sooner was it known that the office had been conferred upon their kinsman, than the Blackadders of the Merse, the Hepburns, and their other allies, were conducted to Edinburgh by their respective chieftains, to pay their obeisance to the new Prior, and escort him thence to the Priory over which he was called to preside.

In the present instance, the ceremony was expected to be one of the most splendid and imposing that had ever been performed within the hallowed walls of Coldingham. No expense was to be spared, it being the first time that a Blackadder had reached the dignified office of Prior. For several weeks preceding the entrance of young Blackadder into his new domains, the good people of Coldingham were all busily engaged in making preparations for the ceremony. Almost every individual in that then far from inconsiderable township found business moving on more briskly than usual in consequence of the anticipated ceremony. Watty Geddes, the tailor, found trade increase so fast upon his hands—being employed to fit out the monks with a new assortment of cowls and scapulars—that he required to enlist into his services, *pro tempore*—that is to say, till the completion of the cowl and scapular job—some five or six knights of the needle from the neighbouring villages of Auldcambus, Eyemouth, and Auchencraw. And, while the wrights, blacksmiths, and other artisans, were busily occupied in making repairs upon the monastery itself, it was with no small exultation that Mistress Grizzel Turnpenny was enabled, one evening, to declare to a "weel-stowed roomfu'" of her neighbours, whom the briskness of trade had induced to squander an extraordinary merk or two upon her liquor, that her fingers were "clean blistered wi' turnin' the spiggot."

Scarce a week had elapsed after the murder of the Prior when Father Benedict, the monk to whom we have already introduced our readers, stole forth from his cell, about midnight, to the stables, where, saddling a pony, he led it softly to the court-gate of the Abbey. It was, of course, at that time, shut, which prevented ingress or egress to a horseman, though foot passengers could at all times gain admittance into the Abbey yards by what was called the Kirk-style.

"Who goes there, and what do'st want?" bawled out Robin Steinson, the porter, who was aroused from his slumbers by a few smart applications of the Father's staff to the door of his lodge.

"I am Father Benedict, who hath been sent for to minister the last offices of the church unto a dying layman: I pray

* The code of ecclesiastical laws interfered to prevent a churchman avenging, with the sword, any insult offered to him. The redress of the injury was usually left to one of his nearest kinsmen

thee, Robin, arouse thyself quickly, otherwise the poor fellow will be let die in his sins, and thou be made responsible."

Hereupon the drowsy porter, whose brain was still reeling from the effects of the preceding evening's potation in Lucky Turnpenny's, arose from his couch and opened the gate; for which service he received the monk's blessing, under the comforting influence of which he once more rolled his drunken carcase under the bedclothes.

The monk, however, went to visit no dying layman, as he had told the porter, but upon quite a different errand. Ere two hours had elapsed, he found himself in front of the proud towers of Wedderburn Castle. As he approached, the moon shone out and displayed to him the figures of the sentinels moving to and fro upon the summits of its battlements. It was a noble pile, and one of the strongest upon the Borders, though it owed its strength more to the assistance of art than of nature. A deep moat, forty feet wide, swept round a septangular wall, fortified with numerous turrets, far above the tops of which fluttered in the moonbeam the banner of its rebellious lord.*

After some altercation with the warders, and undergoing a strict scrutiny, the drawbridge was let down, and Father Benedict admitted into the court-yard. Here he was left to his meditations for some time, till a servant appeared and conducted him into the chieftain's presence. He was sitting by the window in an apartment at the top of the tower, brooding over the melancholy fate which had lately befallen so many of his kinsmen, and revolving how he could most amply revenge it, when the monk entered. His feelings were those of the bitterest chagrin when he heard of the sumptuous arrangements in progress for the inauguration of his kinsman's successor. His pride, too, was mortally hurt when he thought of the joy which prevailed among the inhabitants of Coldingham, who, at any rate, had been no sufferers during the rule of his family—though, perhaps, their rejoicing was rather produced by the supposed advantage that would result from the present increase of trade than from any pleasure felt at the downfall of their old superiors. In this gloomy mood, he had passed the preceding part of the night, and had resolved—and when did a Home resolve in vain?—that Blackadder should fall by his sword.

"Knight of Wedderburn," said the monk, "hath the spirit of the Homes perished with those whom the proud foreigner and his minion have slain? Is there no one still left to tell him that Scotland may not be turned into a slaughter-house for thy race? Two days more and Blackadder, thine enemy, will be Prior of Coldingham."

"And in two days more his head shall be reared upon the highest pinnacle of its towers," interrupted the ruthless knight; "ay, and turned towards the west, too, that when the Regent shall come to visit him, his minion may not be the last to greet him!"

The day fixed for the instalment at length arrived. All the eminences, for many miles around, were occupied by groups of people from the surrounding district, who flocked eagerly together to catch a view of the splendid cavalcade, as it passed on its route to Coldingham. The sun shone out brightly—the birds carolled forth their sweetest notes—and the whole aspect of nature accorded with the joyous state of the spectators' minds. It was a holiday sight which few living had ever before seen. Most of the later priors had intruded themselves into the monastery by force, and, consequently had readily dispensed with the ceremony of formal installation. About midday, the sound of the bagpipe and tambour, now and then broken in upon by the martial blasts of the bugle, announced to the anxious multitude that the procession was approaching nearer and nearer. With one accord they all rose from their seats upon the heath, and vied with each other who should catch the first glimpse of the approaching cavalcade. At length it came so near as to be distinctly visible to all, and was greeted with loud and long-continued cheering. First of all was a four-wheeled vehicle, covered with Tuscan cloth, and decorated with rich figures of the saints, wrought in gold and silver, and drawn by four milk-white steeds, finely harnessed. In it were two monks, clad in loose white robes, kneeling at the foot of an *arbor vitæ* crucifix, to which was affixed an illuminated figure of the Saviour. Behind followed eighty black-clad monks of the order of St Benedict, each holding in his hand an ivory crucifix. Then came a superbly mounted cavalcade, consisting of upwards of five hundred horse, in front of which rode the celebrated Abbot Forman, Archbishop of St Andrew's; the official of Lothian; the Dean of the Merse; and the new Prior—all of their horses adorned with a costly cloth of crimson, the corners of which were supported by four pages who strutted by the side of each. The greater part of the horsemen were well armed, as a precautionary measure against any interruption from the Homes, whose strongholds of Fast Castle and Dunglass were but little removed from the tract which they had to pursue.

A few days antecedent to the celebration of the ceremony, the grand aisle of the church was splendidly decorated with figures of the saints, around whose necks were entwined long and showy wreaths of flowers; and instead of some antiquated full-length portraits of the Homes who had held office in that fane, were substituted those of some of the priors of older date, which, for more than a century, had been laid aside in an obscure corner of the building. On the portals being thrown open for the entry of the procession, the latter were found to have been removed—the portraitures of the more recent priors to have been replaced—the wreaths stripped from the bodies of the images—and the whole interior of the church restored nearly to its usual condition. This disarrangement, however, which afterwards proved fatal to the individual to whom the keys of the sanctuary had been assigned, was insufficient to prevent the commencement of the ceremony. After the celebration of mass, at the high altar, by the Archbishop of St Andrew's, the usual oaths were administered to, and papers signed by the new dignitary, in presence of the whole assembly. Nothing occurred to break in upon the order of the ritual, till that part of it intervened, wherein it was declared by the bailie or sub-prior that the election had taken place without one dissenting voice. At that instant, a harsh-toned voice replied, from the upper part of the building—"A Home objects, and a Home still lives to punish;" and, on looking upward in the direction whence this ominous declaration seemed to proceed, the reflected shadow of a man in armour was seen emerging from behind one of the fluted buttresses. The astonished bailie stood aghast—the parchment dropped from his hand upon the pavement, while a tremulous "Save us, Holy Cuthbert!" escaped from his lips. The rest of the congregation remained for a minute in mute astonishment. At length, silence was broken by Hepburn of Hailes demanding, in a stern voice, who he was that dared thus arrogantly to interrupt the ceremony; at the same time ordering the gates to be locked, and the whole monastery searched for the apprehension of the intruder. Encouraged by his example, a hundred subordinates were quickly set in motion—every corner of the building scoured for the apprehension of the intruder; but no traces of the mysterious visitant were apparent, if we except the impressions of recent footsteps, visible in the garden surrounding the monastery, and traceable from the bottom of a winding stair that communicated with the upper part of the building by a neglected postern. After this fruitless search, the parties returned to

* Sir David Home, the knight of Wedderburn, was outlawed for the murder of the warden De la Beaute, the subject of a former Tale.

the church, and the remainder of the ceremony was gone through; but the spirits of all present had received such a "damper" as resisted the effects of several flagons of Mistress Turnpenny's best liquor, which was afterwards dispensed free to all (and they were not few) who chose to partake of the new Prior's bounty. Various were the conjectures thrown out by the populace as to the manner in which a Priorship so inauspiciously begun would terminate.

On the following morning, the Prior, accompanied by a part of the retinue which had attended at the installation, in accordance with the usual custom, proceeded on a diet of visitation to the various cells and chapelries within his jurisdiction. Having visited the cell at Ayton, the cavalcade advanced toward Lamberton, the eastern boundary of the diocese. On visitations of such a nature, it was customary for all whom they met upon their way to retire to a little distance from the road, and to remain uncovered till the company who formed the procession passed by. The latter had only traversed about half of the ground between the places just mentioned, when a troop of armed horsemen appeared advancing toward them across the moor. Instead, however, of observing the general practice of falling off to the left, they continued advancing onward in the middle of the road. Perceiving the inclination thus manifested to neglect this point of etiquette, one of the horsemen connected with the cavalcade, galloped up to the daring and irreverent equestrians, to expostulate with them on the impropriety of non-compliance therewith. His exhortations were, however, utterly disregarded; and, on using certain language deemed insulting by the party, a scuffle ensued, and shortly terminated in the overthrow of the unfortunate mediator. In the meantime, the monastic assemblage looked not on with indifference. The armed escort now abandoned their position in the rear, and planted themselves in a dense body in the middle of the path, determined to avenge the insult thus offered to clerical dignity. The monks, at the same time, retired to an eminence a little removed from the road to await the result of the combat. Nor did the recusant horsemen seem to have expected a submissive toleration of the affront; for no sooner had they vented their rage upon the person of the unfortunate wight who had dared to dictate to them, then they formed themselves into fighting array, and continued their progress till they arrived within a few yards of the insulted Prior and his escort. Nothing in the shape of parley was for a moment attempted. It was obvious, from the firm and determined posture into which both parties had thrown themselves, that nothing less than the blood of his antagonist would satisfy the rancour that burned within the breast of each. The result of the skirmish was long doubtful. At the very commencement, two individuals joined together in single combat; and, for some time, continued to parry each other's blows with the greatest success. At length, the elder of the two received such a severe stroke from his antagonist upon his sword-arm, that it fell powerless by his side, and his weapon dropped upon the heath. His adversary immediately sprung upon him like a tiger upon his prey, grappled him by the throat, hurled him to the ground, and planted his knee firmly upon his breast. Then, drawing out from his belt a silver-hilted dagger, and pointing it to the heart of his victim, he exclaimed—

"Ha, knave! didst thou think that a Home no longer lived to revenge the murder of his kinsman? Thou shalt now die for it!" At the same time, he plunged the weapon up to the hilt in the heart of his prostrate adversary. Scarcely had he done so, when a youth, dressed in an ecclesiastic robe, sprung forward, apparently for the purpose of arresting the fate of the fallen man; but he came too late. In his eagerness to intercept the fatal blow, he stumbled, and instantly shared the fate of him whom he had come to save.

Need it be added that the individual who achieved these sanguinary deeds was David Home, the knight of Wedderburn, and that his victims were Hepburn the chieftain, and Blackadder the Prior? The combat, which was long afterwards known upon the Borders as the "Raid of Lamberton," terminated in favour of the Homes. The heads of Hepburn and the Prior were hewn off and fixed over the principal gate of the Abbey, where they were allowed to remain for some months—a horrible spectacle to the multitude.

THE STORY OF DUGALD GLEN,

THE SHEPHERD OF DILSTON.

Several years have now elapsed since I resolved to spend a month of the summer's vacation in making a pilgrimage to some of the scenes famed in history or in song, which impart an interest to the confines of the sister kingdoms. With this intention I set out, one morning early, from my habitation on the banks of the Tweed, with a heart as light as the breeze that played around me. The third week of my peregrinations found me in what is called the Tindale Ward of Northumberland. Having feasted my appetite for the antique, by exploring the numerous relics of the Romans with which that district abounds, one afternoon I came unexpectedly upon the picturesque ruins of the castellated mansion of Dilston Hall—formerly the residence of the unfortunate James, Earl of Derwentwater, who, in 1716, was beheaded for abetting the Earl of Mar in his vain attempt at reinstating the Stuarts upon the throne. These venerable remains occupied the summit of a steep and beautifully wooded bank, which overhangs the romantic rivulet, or rather brook, of Devil's Water, near its confluence with the Tyne. The sky, which, during the earlier part of the day, had been clear and serene, became suddenly now overcast with dark clouds, which forthwith began to discharge themselves in a heavy shower. To escape a "ducking," I found myself compelled to seek shelter in the interior of a gloomy vault, a few yards distant from the ruins, which had been used as a burial place by the ancient Barons of Dilston Hall, but, as I ascertained from the marks upon its pavement, had been latterly converted into the ignoble purpose of a pen for sheep. Scarcely had I entered, when the storm burst forth furiously, and, in a few minutes, the brook, which laved the base of the rock on which the vault stood, came brawling down with the noise and vehemence of a torrent. No alternative was thus left me, but to amuse myself, as best I might, in attempting to decipher a few of the time-worn monumental tablets that were imbedded in the walls of this sombre mansion of the dead. I had spent some time in tracing the scarcely legible characters that told of the deeds and achievements of the ancient barons of Dilston, whose mouldering ashes crumbled beneath my feet, and was proceeding to transfer to a scrap of paper the inscription upon the most recent of these monuments, erected by Anne, Countess of Derwentwater, to the memory of her brave but unfortunate son, when the vault became suddenly darkened. On turning round to ascertain the cause of this, I found it to be occasioned by an old shepherd, who stood at its entrance, apparently a good deal astonished at finding me seated in such a situation. I soon entered into conversation with him, and discovered him to be not only intelligent, but likewise disposed to be very communicative. He told me that he was a native of Scotland; but, for several years past, had been employed in the capacity of shepherd to a farmer in that neighbourhood. The family of Derwentwater became the subject of conversation; and having talked of the fate of the last of its earls, I was led to speak of the subsequent insurrection of 1745, which had for

ever blasted the hopes of the House of Stuart. Talking of the battle of Preston, which, for a time, had inspired the adherents of the Chevalier with expectations of success, the old man's face brightened up, and, with considerable pride, he told me that his father had been one of those who fell fighting in the "gude cause" on that bloody field. "Had you time, Sir," said he, "I could tell you something about that business that, aiblins, you mayna ha'e heard afore; but it's a lang story, and, I doubt, no jist a proper ane to be tauld in siccan a eerie place as this. An' you're no feared for a wet coat, you might e'en stap down the burn to my beild, that's no muckle mair than a stanesthraw frae this, an' there you shall be made welcome to rest yoursel' till sic time as the storm blaw by; and I, the meantime, wad be tellin' you the story o' my faither and the Laird o' Glengorroch." A minute's walk, or rather run, brought us to the shepherd's hut, and another had scarcely time to slide by before I was seated, hob-a-nob, with Dugald Glen, (for that was the name of my new acquaintance,) before a blazing fire, listening to a narration of the marvellous incidents, which, on my return home, I embodied in the following story, which is now submitted to the readers of the Border Tales.

It was on a fine still evening in the autumn of 1745, that the clansmen of Glengorroch, with their aged chieftain at their head, marched from the Highland glen of that name, to share the fortunes of Prince Charles Edward, who had reared his standard on the heath of Glenfinnan. Their wives and children were collected in groups on the sides of the Gorroch mountain, in order to enjoy as long a view as possible of the "tartaned warriors." The anxious, though somewhat proud interest, with which they gazed on their departing forms, deepened in proportion as the distance between them was magnified; and when, at length, an abrupt winding of the glen carried their kinsmen, one by one, from their sight, a simultaneous shriek, or rather yell, burst from the female multitude. Then, having gazed for some time on the particular object of their love or affection, they hastily pressed their weeping children to their bosoms, and slowly began to move down the acclivity of the mountain to their hamlet in the vale below, to muse in silence on the strange enterprise that was taking their relatives "awa frae the land o' the mountain and heather;" while Lady Helen, the daughter of their chieftain, returned in sorrow to the old castle or tower of Glengorroch, which reared its high and somewhat dilapidated turrets on the summit of a precipitous cliff that projected from the northern side of the mountain.

With the proceedings of Prince Charles, after his being joined by the Glengorroch and other disaffected clans, our readers are too well acquainted to require any farther information from us. They will recollect that, on the evening prior to the battle of Preston, the royal army, under the command of Sir John Cope, lay encamped on that wide and then barren plain which extends between the village of Tranent and the sea; whereas the insurgent forces occupied the gentle slope of a hill a little to the northward of that village—an extensive and intricate morass, which has now disappeared under the improvements of modern agriculture, stretching between them. Thus were the rival armies situated on the wet and foggy night of the 20th September 1745, awaiting the approach of the dawn to commence the onset. The hardy mountaineer, accustomed to deeds of slaughter and bloodshed, lay wrapt in his tartan plaid on the bare ground, in profound repose; while many a less courageous Lowlander, who had either joined in the enterprise in a fit of enthusiasm, or from a spirit of retaliation engendered by wrongs received from those in authority, heard the cry of the sentinels as they changed guard, and viewed the watch-fires blazing on the plain with feelings of a far from pleasing kind.

On that night, as the chieftain of Glengorroch sat in his tent, after his brother officers had retired to their slumbers, meditating on the probable issue of the morrow's engagement, there entered the form of an aged Highlander, accoutred in a full suit of armour; but his body was bowed down with the load of years, and the sword which hung unsheathed by his side was reddened with gore, that flowed in a dark purple stream from a wound in his side. His face was unearthly pale, the features being contracted into a convulsive grin, rather, however, betokening a feeling of acute pain than of displeasure. The spectre (for such it was) glided toward the spot where the chieftain was sitting, and then fixing his lustreless eyes upon him, he pronounced, in a solemn sepulchral tone—"Glengorroch, prepare; for thy hour is coming! Ere the morrow's sun hath set, the last chieftain of Glengorroch shall be no more!" And, as the voice died away, the figure became gradually more and more indistinct, till, at length, it almost disappeared. At first, the chieftain had tried to speak, and ask the officer, whom he then conceived the apparition to be, the cause of so unexpected a visit, when suddenly the idea of his being in the presence of Dhorach nan Dhu, the mysterious being who was supposed to preside over the destinies of his race, flashed upon his mind, and rendered every effort to speak for some time abortive, though his mind remained little more affected than might be attributed to surprise at so strange a sight. During the vision, he sat boldly gazing on the spectre, and instead of appearing alarmed or daunted at the appalling annunciation, a smile of sadness played upon his aged features; and, on regaining his speech, just as the apparition was gliding out of sight, he calmly exclaimed—

"Spectre! phantom! or whoever thou art, who hast thus kindly come to warn me of my approaching doom, depart not, I pray thee, till thou hast likewise foretold to me what shall be the destiny of the heiress of our house, that, when the fatal blow shall fall on his head, Glengorroch may die in peace."

While he spoke, the spectre entirely vanished; but, at the further end of the apartment, the form of a lady, in tears and in deep mourning, was seen approaching a gloomy convent, at the portal of which stood a train of nuns attired in the unostentatious garb of the sisterhood. As the figure of the lady entered the convent, the tent resounded with the solemn tones of the organ, which ceased on the novice and the nuns disappearing, and the gates being closed. Glengorroch sat for some time with his eyes rivetted to the spot where the vision had melted away, engaged in deep thought. At length he gave utterance to the painful emotions which overcame him at the latter apparition.

"And is it even so?—are thus all my high fancies to be blasted for ever?—and is it to fare thus hard with the last remnant of Glengorroch? Alas! my poor child! how are all thy father's proud hopes and wishes for thy happiness in a moment departed, and the heart, which could have smiled upon its own misfortunes, made to weep tears of blood for thine!"

During the remainder of the night, he continued to pace backward and forward, his mind engrossed with the most melancholy reflections. The dawn at length began to break, and they were interrupted by the entrance of his old and faithful domestic, Dugald Glen, a Lowlander by birth, but whose long servitude had caused him to be considered by his master rather *in* the light of a *confidant* than as an ordinary serving-man. He entered the tent with a smile on his countenance, which became suddenly dispelled as he observed that of his master overcast with a look of unusual sadness. Without paying much attention to the old man, who had now intruded himself into his presence, Glengorroch continued his perambulations, engaged in the same gloomy reverie as previous to Dugald's appearance By this time, daylight had advanced so far as to render the torch, which continued to blaze on the floor of the apartment, altogether

superfluous. This quickly attracted Dugald's notice, who remarked, as he extinguished the blazing faggot, that it was 'neither mair nor less than sinnin' ane's mercies to use baith day an' torch light at the same time;" and this he did in a louder tone than usual, chiefly with a view of rousing his master from his reveries, that he might ascertain what had given rise to the painful reflections, which, from long experience of his habits, he readily saw were passing in the chieftain's mind. The latter, at the loud exclamation of Dugald, turned hastily round, and, speedily assuming his wonted smile, said to the venerable valet—"So, Dugald, you are quickly afoot; you, for one, seem determined not to be backward in the fight. How goes the time, Dugald?—is the Prince astart yet?—and how are our English friends looking this morning!"

"Please your honour," replied Dugald, bowing respectfully, "the sun is just beginning to keek out frae the clouds ower Berwick Law; an' as for the Prince, he's been rinnin' frae ae tent to anither this half hour, an', I doubt not, will be wi' your Grace i' the crack o' a nut shell; an' when I came ben, the Southrons were putting out their fires, and seemed to be in an unco flurry. But, i' the name o' the Holy Virgin, what's makin' you look sae pale an' fearsome? I declare your cheeks are as white as a snaw-ba, or a sliced turnip; it canna be that your honour's fear'd for the day's wark; but, aiblins, you may find yoursel' ower weak to fight at your time o' life, an' nae wonder?"

"Fear hath ever been a stranger to the heart of our race, Dugald," rejoined the chieftain, reassuming the thoughtful look which had been dispersed by the appearance of his attendant; "and at no period during my long life did I feel myself more able or willing to wield my sword manfully, than to-day. But, if my face be, as you say, paler than usual, it is owing neither to fear nor weakness; other and weightier causes are required to drive the colour from my face; and, alas! these have been sent enough to curdle every drop of blood in my veins; but thou knowest them not, Dugald, and it is better thou shouldst not, for thine old eyes will mayhap have closed in death ere the last event come to pass."

"By the Holy St Peter!" said the old man, with a look of the most serious alarm, "am I to believe my ears, or has your honour been dreamin'? My dear maister, if you care ae straw for your puir servant, tell him what it is that's makin' you speak in that fashion. Before I left you last night, you were in the greatest spirits, an' now you're lookin' as white as a corp, an' talkin' in that fearsome manner just when you're on the point o' being restored to a' your ancient honours and dignities. O my dear maister, tell me if ony danger is like to happen thee or thine, an' auld Dugald Glen 'll no grudge the best drap o' bluid in his body to keep you frae skaith." And here the tears ran down the old man's face as he fell to the ground and grasped his master's knees.

"Poor old man!" said the chieftain, a tear, at the same time glistening in his eyes, "last night I thought as thou dost even now, that honour and power were about once more to smile on our ill-starred house; but the fates have otherwise determined. However, my kind old man, enough hath been left from the wreck to enable thee to spend the remainder of thy days in peace and comfort; take this, Dugald"—holding out to the old man his purse, at which, however, he gazed without offering to accept it—"this is all I will be able to leave thee for thy long and faithful services; but I will speak to the Prince in thy behalf, and he, I doubt not, will not see our old servant want; *one thing*," added Glengorroch, hurriedly, "*one thing* let me beseech thee to do, in the event of evil betiding thy master—give this ring to Helen, as a memorial from her father."

"My honoured maister!" exclaimed the poor old man, after a great many ineffectual efforts to speak, and in a voice quivering with emotion, "waes me, that my auld een should hae seen this day!—auld Dugald Glen should hae been lang syne lyin' wi' his forbears in Auchtermuchty kirkyard. O my puir maister! But what did the bogle say was to befa Leddy Helen?"

"Ask me not further, Dugald; what I have alluded to has been foretold for the last time by the being who presides over the destinies of our race. Take the money, Dugald; you will find it useful when you are once more obliged to shift for yourself; and keep this for Helen."

"O my puir maister! an' is it so you think my affections are to be got and broken off? Do you think that auld Dugald Glen can live after his first and only maister has perished?—No, no, my Lord; the same hour that shall terminate the race of Glengorroch shall lay auld Dugald i' the dust. I needna, therefore, the money, my Lord, an' the ring you maun consign to other hands to gie puir Leddy Helen. O my puir maister! waes me I should hae lived to see this day!"

"Thou art wrong," said Glengorroch, struggling to conceal his emotion, "thou art wrong, my kind old man; thou mayest yet live to see many a happy day, and it were folly in thee to betake thyself to the field, resolved to share the fate of thy unhappy master, particularly when thou couldst be so well employed in conveying to poor Helen this last token of her father's love."

Any further controversy on this distressing subject was now arrested by a slight tap on the door, at which, almost instantly, Prince Charles entered between two Highlanders, who placed themselves by his side. He wore a blue velvet bonnet, surmounted by the famous "white cockade," and a tartan coat with the star of St Andrew on his breast. A blue sash, embroidered with gold, hung gracefully over his shoulder, while at his side dangled a massy silver-hilted broadsword. His countenance was lightened up by a smile; and immediately he began to discourse with the chief respecting the approaching contest. During this interview, the latter seemed to have regained his former spirits, smiling and even laughing at the humorous remarks with which the Prince's conversation, as usual, abounded. Ere long they sallied out together, joined the rest of the officers, held a council of war, and resolved to attack the enemy immediately. The mist, hovering in dense clouds over the intervening morass, prevented either army from distinctly observing the movements of the other, so that, by the aid of a person well acquainted with the ground, the troops of Prince Charles were enabled to cross the marsh without observation, and to draw themselves up in order of battle. A scene of bustle and confusion pervaded the royal army, when the terrific yell, whereby the Highlanders commenced the attack, too truly proved that the hedge, which they fancied they saw before them, gradually becoming more and more conspicuous as the day approached, was none other than the armed host of the enemy. Short but decisive was the conflict that followed. The hardy Highlanders, with the fury of a winter's torrent rushing down their mountain glens, fiercely assaulted the troops of the foe, and, in five or six minutes, routed and put them to flight; and, amid the groans of the dying warriors, rose the joyful shout of "God save King James—the Stuart for ever!" After the battle, the field presented, as might have been expected, a most melancholy and disgusting spectacle—strewed with the mangled bodies of the slain who had fallen under the tremendous broadsword. The few surviving retainers of Glengorroch sought out from the lifeless bodies of their clansmen, that of their venerated master, which was pierced with many a wound. During the engagement he had fought bravely at the head of his own undisciplined group of mountaineers. The last charge was made. Glengorroch rejoiced in the expectation of victory, and the prophecy of Dhorach seemed unlikely to be realised. And victory came—but the chief-

tain was pierced with a bullet which stretched him on the plain; and on the now-cultured spot where he fell, a stately hawthorn tree, that has braved the storms of upwards of ninety winters, points out to the passing traveller the place where in peace he rests from his warfare; near which a solitary mound marks the lowly sepulchre of his faithful domestic, Dugald Glen, and the greater part of the ill-fated clan of Glengorroch.

On the evening of that day whose morn had proved so fatal to her parent, did the fair Helen leave the tower of Glengorroch, with the intention of proceeding to the hamlet, to ascertain if any intelligence had arrived of the proceedings of the Prince; but so occupied did her mind become with forebodings relative to the success of the enterprise whereon her father had embarked his life and fortunes that she proceeded in a totally different direction, through a wild and tractless ravine, utterly unconscious, or, at any rate, heedless whither she wandered. Over this rugged path did she continue to move onwards, notwithstanding the many obstacles which impeded her progress, till her farther advancement was eventually stayed by her arriving on the margin of the deep lake of Gorroch, whose placid bosom was then illumined by the pale rays of the moon. As she gazed on its tranquil waters, slumbering in all the beauty of an autumn's eve, the anxious feelings which previously harassed her mind became gradually subdued. Regardless of the hour and the solitude of the spot, she seated herself on a fragment of rock that lay upon the margin of the lake, and continued, if not to admire, at least to be soothed by the calm scene before her. At length, however, her attention was irresistibly distracted from the subject that had given rise to her moonlight excursion, on observing, at about sixty or seventy yards from her, a sudden burst of flame arise from a small island, whereon mouldered the ruins of a chapel, within whose vaults had been deposited, from time immemorial, the ashes of the chieftains of Glengorroch. Utterly at a loss to account for so strange a circumstance, and possessed of a mind impressed from her earliest childhood by the wild legends and superstitions which did then, as well as at the present day, exert so powerful a sway over the feelings of the Highlanders, it will not be wondered at that a sort of dread overcame her at the sight. It increased as the moon became once more obscured by a dense mass of clouds; the dark interval being rendered yet more dismal by the terrific glare in which the whole of the trees upon the island were speedily enveloped. Motionless she sat, with her eyes fixed in fearful gaze upon the towering conflagration, in which appeared to be fast consuming the spot that had ever been held sacred by the natives of that wild region, till the lake, and the hills in whose bosom it reclined, became once more irradiated by the more genial moonlight. Not to dispel, indeed, the terror which had now seized upon the maid of Glengorroch, did fair Luna once more throw her gladsome mantle over the heath-embrowned mountains; for no sooner had the clouds floated from before her round disk, than the pale Helen descried a form, apparently of mortal make, gliding upon the surface of the lake, and nearing the spot where she sat. She had just time to observe that neither boat nor oars were required to carry this mysterious intruder on her solitude on his way to the shore, and to infer that none other than Dhorach nan Dhu, of whom she had previously heard much, but whom she had never before seen, was approaching, before terror overcame her and she swooned. On arriving within a few yards of the damsel, he halted; and looking long and steadfastly on her pale features, his withered countenance assumed a look of pity, as he uttered to himself the following in Gaelic:—

"And has it, at length, fallen upon Dhorach nan Dhu to pronounce to the fairest maiden of these mountains the fate which has long been hovering over her father's race? Now is my father's son the most wretched of beings. Oh! blame me not, lady, for even now, methinks, I see an upbraiding look distort thy most beautiful of countenances."

Thus far had his soliloquy proceeded, when the object to whom it related, probably startled by the loud tone of the speaker, or supernaturally influenced, raised her head from the position into which it had fallen on the occurrence of the syncope, and, strange as it may appear, now looked with comparative composure upon the being whose very approach had well nigh bereft her of existence. A pause ensued, ascribable, probably, on the part of the one, to a certain incapability of utterance which has been uniformly supposed to overcome mortals when in the presence of beings of "more than mortal mould," (and of the ethereal essence of Dhorach nan Dhu, it may readily be supposed Lady Helen did not harbour the slightest doubt,) and on the part of the other, to an unwillingness to communicate the painful intelligence which devolved upon him, as the last seer who presided over the expiring destinies of Glengorroch. Turning, at length, half round, and pointing to the flaming pile in the midst of the lake, he continued—"Lady of Gorroch, seest thou yonder flame, in which is consuming the spot where the ashes of thy ancestors repose? Thy father, and the clan whom thou sawest march forth from these glens, shall need no such restingplace! They, and he from whom thou art sprung, have found a sepulchre on the battle-field of the Lowlander, and there in peace shall the last chieftain of Glengorroch rest from his warfare! The work of Dhorach nan Dhu is now at a close; and with yonder expiring flame," continued he, still pointing to the island where the fire was now nearly extinguished, "shall perish the last seer of thy father's clan!"

Having thus spoken, he plunged, head-foremost, into the lake; and the reverberation of one solitary shriek among the surrounding caverns and glens, rang the death-knell of Dhorach nan Dhu.

How or when, after the above awful meeting with Dhorach nan Dhu, Lady Helen reached the tower of Glengorroch, the narrative of the shepherd left us uninformed. Certain it is, however, that from that period her health and beauty began to wane, notwithstanding all the efforts of those who lent their skill to effect a cure; and prior to her entering a foreign convent, not many months afterwards, such as were familiar with her, traced in the incoherency of her discourse, which always had reference to that fatal meeting, a lamentable failure in her mind.



WILSON'S

Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative

TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE HEROINE.

After it became known that the wily Sir Robert Carey had hurried away from the deathbed of Queen Elizabeth, to announce to the delighted monarch of Scotland his succession to the crown of England, a great many English noblemen and gentlemen came to Scotland on much the same errand that brings so many of them at this day, viz. to hunt; the game, in the one case, being place and favour, and in the other, blackcock and grouse. Among the rest, there was one Sir Willoughby Somerset, of Somerset-Hall, in Devonshire, a knight of gay and chivalric manners, excellently set off by an exterior on which nature and art had expended their best favours, but exhibiting, at same time, in his total want of true honour and mental acquirements, that tendency to a fair distribution, which nature, in all her departments, delights in displaying—suggesting, as it did to an ancient philosopher, that the *pulchrum* and the *utile* are dealt out in equal portions under a whimsical law against their combination.

Having arrived, with his gay suit of servants and splendid equipage, at the palace of Holyrood, Sir Willoughby was informed that there were no apartments close to the palace which could be given to him for his accommodation, in consequence of the great influx of noble visiters who had come from all parts of Scotland and England to testify their allegiance, and express their satisfaction, whether real or assumed, on the occasion of King James' succession. Sir Willoughby, therefore, took up his abode in a house in the Canongate, which was pulled down more than a hundred years ago—at that time known by the name of the House of Gordon, in consequence, it is supposed, of having at one time been occupied by the ducal family of that name.

The house which Sir Willoughby thus took possession of was situated on the south side of the street, and nearly opposite to the close called Big Loch-end Close, which possessed at that time a very different appearance from what it does at present; for the double row of low Flemish-looking huts which lined the narrow entry, have given place to modern buildings, which do not look half so well as their more humble predecessors.

In one of these little huts, there lived, at that time—unconscious, doubtless, that their names would thus become of historical interest centuries after they were gathered to their fathers—a man called Adam Hunter, and his wife, Janet, both of some importance in the small sphere of their own little gossiping world; but, if these humble individuals had been all that their lowly mansion had contained, the chronicler would scarcely have stooped to notice either it or its inhabitants. There was a third inmate in that house—an orphan girl, called Margaret Williamson; a young, slender, azure-eyed creature, about seventeen years of age, of startling and bewitching beauty, and of a simplicity, kindness, and meekness of disposition, that endeared her to thousands. Producing that kind of interest and sensation in her own limited circle, which is so often found to be the effect of the mysterious power of beauty, though allied to poverty, which, indeed, sometimes enhances it, Margaret seemed as unconscious of the magic influence of her charms, as she was of the singular fate that awaited her. She had been heard of where she was not seen; and, innocent and harmless as she was, she had not been passed unheeded by the "wise women" of her day, who, in spite of fire and King James' wrath, provided her, according to their love or their spite, with a prison or a palace, as her lot upon earth. As already hinted, Margaret was represented as being an orphan, brought up by the gratuitous kindness of Adam Hunter and his wife—though there were not wanting some who thought that her parentage was not of the equivocal kind that was represented.

Scotland was not, at that time, so far behind in the love and practice of gossiping, as that there should be any want of the usual kind and number of remarks on the new-comers to the house of Gordon; and the family of Adam Hunter were not behind their neighbours in their curiosity.

"He's a braw knight that wha has come to the House o' Gordon," said Janet Hunter, one night when they were sitting round the fire.

"Ken ye wha, or what, or whence he is," inquired Adam, "attour the mere title an' form o' his knighthood?

"I ken naething about him," replied Janet; "save that his name is Sir Willoughby Somerset, and that he has a great number o' servitors, wham he treats like princes. They say he is gallant and weel-favoured; and Elspet Craig, the wise woman o' the Watergate, says, in her fashion o' speech, that he is a rock whereon the happiness, and peace o' mind, and honour o' mony a' bonny maiden may perish like the silly boats that trust to the smiles o' an autumn day. But, if I'm no cheated, Peggy Williamson can tell mair about the knight than a' the 'wise women' frae the Watergate to St Mary's."

"An' if she can," said Adam, "it may be waur for her than if she were as deep learned as Elspet Craig in the mysteries o' that art whereby she works sae meikle mischief to her faes, and may, peradventure, bring upon her head the vengeance of the law. I houp better things o' Peggy."

"I ken naething aboot the Knight o' the White Feather," said Margaret, with a deep sigh; "and wherefore should I?—he's far abune my degree."

"But ye ken, at least," rejoined Adam, "that he wears a white feather, my bonny bird—and feathered creatures are flichtie, especially when they're far frae their ain countrie. Even our ain robin, wha condescends to come and eat our crumbs, when the snaw is on the hill, leaves us in summer; and, mair than a' that, he's a bird o' prey, and doesna hesitate, when he has a gude opportunity, to soil his bonny red breast wi' the blood o' his companions."

It was apparent that both Adam Hunter and Janet were suspicious of Margaret's limited knowledge of the knight; and they had good reason to be so; for Janet had been told that, one night, when Margaret had said she was going to meet a person of the name of Simon Frazer—a tradesman who had been making honourable proposals to her, along with many others who were proud to be called her suitors—she had been seen walking with a gentleman wrapped up in a Spanish cloak, supposed to be Sir Willoughby, in the glen of St Arthur's Seat, called the Hunter's Bog. On another occasion, she had been followed by Simon Frazer to a trysting place, known by the name of the Hunter's Rest—a large boulder of basalt lying on the side of the bog, and remarkable to geologists by its unaccountable position. On this stone Margaret had sat till the moon had concealed her horns behind the top of St Arthur's, and the glen had gradually become enveloped in the shade of the hill. Simon Frazer took advantage of the gloom, and concealed himself

near to the spot where Margaret sat; and, amidst the silence which reigned in this secluded place, he could distinctly hear the sighs of the maiden, as the hope of seeing the person she had come to meet became fainter and fainter.

"Wae's my puir deluded heart!" she said, in a desponding and tremulous voice; "what is it that drives me, like a charmed bird or a dementit thing, into the power o' this braw knight, in spite o' the warnings o' Elspet Craig, the admonition o' Adam Hunter, and, what's abune a', the fearsome visions o' my ain wild dreams? Can it be that I, wha hae seen, and may still see, sae mony bended knees o' lovers o' my ain country supplicating my favours as if their condition here and in anither warld depended on a blink o' these worthless een, sit here, even noo, at the Hunter's Rest, a mile frae my ain hame, and when naething but spirits are in the glen, to meet a lover frae a strange land, wha speaks a strange language, and mak's love in a strange fashion? But it is even sae. My heart is nae langer my ain. He has ta'en it into his ain keeping, and he may, in his ain pleasure, as easily break it as he may crush the bonny blue bells that flower there i' the glen."

At the termination of Margaret's simple soliloquy, the sound of footsteps was heard, and there soon followed the greeting of lovers. Margaret's spirits soon revived, and, having taken Sir Willoughby's arm, she said, playfully, as she looked up into his face—"The faithless moon has been truer this nicht than ye hae been; for she left the tap o' the hill half an hour syne, and ye are only here noo."

"Upbraid me not, my fair Margaret," answered Sir Willoughby; "for I was scared at the Friar's Path by some person who seemed inclined to follow me, and I was obliged to change my road; but thou knowest that love is fed by hindrances, and its course is none of the straightest.'

"I didna think," answered the simple maiden, "that true love stood in need o' onything else in this warld, than the company and kindness o' the twa lovers to ane anither."

"By my feather, Margaret, that is a true maiden's speech! But I do not think that St Arthur, who must surely be the lover's saint, will thank us for an argument, instead of a love token, on such a beautiful night as this. Observe these gleams of Cynthian glory, falling like streaks of silver on the tops of the crags, investing the darkness of this glen with a mystery in which love delights, and thou wilt forget thy argument, in the sweets of our accustomed dalliance."

"That is a licht aith, Sir Willoughby, that ye hae sworn," answered the maiden; "but every land, as the sang says, has its ain laugh, and it may also hae its ain aith; and I may weel forgie ye that, for the bonny words ye hae now spoken. Foreign lands hae finer words than puir Scotland; but dinna think that I canna enjoy the beauty o' these silvery rocks and that mirky glen, because my silly heart can find nae utterance to its feelings, but by its ain unmeaning thrabs."

"And that is nature's best and most beautiful language, my sweet bird," said Sir Willoughby, kissing the yielding maiden; "nor would I give one throb of thy fair bosom for all the eloquence of poetry."

Holding such conversation, the lovers passed deeper into the shades of the hill, and disappeared; but the death-like silence of the place, discovered, to the disappointed Simon Frazer, many sighs and protestations which otherwise would have been sacred to the happy pair.

Many such meetings had Sir Willoughby and Margaret. Their walks became more frequent, and of longer duration; and it was often a late hour before Margaret returned to her home. It could not be that such a change in the habits of the girl could escape the keen eye of public curiosity, and far less the suspicious guardianship of Adam Hunter. Wide spread, and generally known, as was the beauty of the maiden, so, in proportion, was the voice of scandal heard over the town, whispering the strange tidings, that Peggy Williamson had been seduced by the great knight who lived in the House of Gordon.

The circumstance, indeed, very soon became apparent, from the condition of the unhappy girl, who could no longer conceal her pregnancy. She was, in consequence, sorely beset by Adam Hunter, and interrogated whether she had received any promise of marriage, or any pledge whereon she could found any expectation or hope that the knight's intentions towards her were of an honourable nature. On this subject, no satisfaction could be got from Margaret, who persisted in a dogged silence, whenever any question was put to her, tending to implicate, in any way, the man who, to all appearance, had ruined her. But chance brought to light what Margaret had been so anxious to conceal; for one evening, Janet Hunter discovered in Margaret's sleeping apartment a small scented paper, curiously folded up, which she instantly carried to her husband. Adam took the paper to a learned clerk, in Blackfriars' Hospital—(for few persons, at that day, could either write, or read writing)—who read it to him; and he was surprised to find that it contained a promise, on the faith of a knight, that Sir Willoughby Somerset would make, when time and circumstance afforded opportunity, Margaret Williamson his wedded wife. The paper was again returned to the place from which it was taken.

This paper, combined with Margaret's pregnancy, having satisfied Adam Hunter of the truth of the general report and his own suspicions, he lost no time in waiting upon the knight. Being a man of a hasty and even furious temper, he taxed Sir Willoughby, in unmeasured terms, with the seduction of his ward, and demanded, with a stern determination, satisfaction to the maiden and to himself. Touched to the quick, and wounded in his pride by the pertinacious manner of Adam Hunter, Sir Willoughby lost in turn his temper, and, seizing a baton which lay near him, he struck the choleric Scot a heavy blow on the head, and, with the aid of his servants, kicked him out of the house. One of Sir Willoughby's servants, who aided in this ejection and outrage, was Richard Forster; the person who, it was supposed, first procured a meeting between his master and Margaret. He was possessed of his master's secrets, in this and many other dishonourable amours; and, though he now, by his master's orders, assisted in the expulsion of Adam Hunter, he hated him in his heart, in consequence of a blow which he had some time before received from him, on which occasion he had threatened to report his master's practices to Sir Robert Carey, who would not have failed to communicate them to King James, whereby Sir Willoughby's status at Court would have been lost, and his ruin accomplished. The knight wished, therefore, to get quit of Richard; but to part with him living was to part with his secrets; and he had accordingly made up his mind to get him disposed of in such a manner as that he could tell no tales. An opportunity for this occurred sooner than might have been expected.

Stung with an ungovernable rage, Adam Hunter, on passing the threshold of the House of Gordon, threw himself on his knees, and vowed to Almighty God that he would take the first opportunity that fortune afforded him of depriving his enemy of life. This dreadful purpose, thus definitively and impiously settled, calmed Adam Hunter's rage; for he felt, as if by anticipation, that he was revenged. He walked deliberately home, and, without hinting anything of his deadly purpose to his wife, sent for Simon Frazer, Margaret's rejected suitor, communicated to him his intention, and requested his co-operation. Frazer entered into the scheme with all the spirit of his clan, and all the rage of a disappointed lover towards his successful rival. They resolved to fix the manner of accomplishing their purpose that evening, after Janet and Margaret had retired to rest.

In the evening, when Adam Hunter and Simon Frazer

met, Margaret had just retired to bed, but not to sleep. Her mind was occupied with the thoughts of her situation. She had now become suspicious of Sir Willoughby's intentions. In her late interviews with him, he had been distant and shy; and he had even refused, on one occasion, to meet her, alleging, as an excuse, that he was engaged to go to an evening entertainment, to which it was ascertained he never went. He had, besides, endeavoured to get back from her the letter, which, in an unguarded moment, when intoxicated with love and wine, he had given to her. All these circumstances satisfied the unhappy maiden that she was about to become, or rather had already become, the dupe of a heartless villain. She now considered herself standing on the very verge of ruin; about to become, as Elspet Craig had foreboded, the victim of a passion insidiously introduced into her young heart; and left to the scorn of an unfeeling world, or the unavailing pity of a conceited and unfruitful philanthropy. These reflections were passing through her mind, when she heard Simon Frazer come into the house; for her bed was so situated that she could hear everything that occurred in the adjoining apartment. She soon ascertained the object of this late meeting of the two friends; and, with feelings that shook her whole frame, she heard it fixed that, on the following evening, when Sir Willoughby was expected to go to an evening entertainment at the palace, Adam Hunter should gain the staircase window of Widow Hutchison, fire upon his enemy, and, upon seeing him fall, make his escape, along with his friend, by a back passage that led to the North Back of the Canongate. This resolved upon, the two friends parted.

The agitation which the knowledge of this fierce and bloody purpose produced in the mind of Margaret, was proportioned to the love which she still bore to her seducer, and to the gentle character of the maiden, who shrunk from the very thought of violence. Her nerves had, moreover, been severely affected by the train of sorrowful thoughts which, at the moment when she heard the fatal resolution, were passing through her mind. But a new feeling soon arose. She was now called upon to act, and the urgency of the case requiring the most prompt communication to Sir Willoughby, assuaged, in some degree, her nervous excitement, by forcing her ideas into a train calculated to the contrivance of some method of meeting him in the morning.

At daybreak, Margaret rose from her sleepless pillow, wrapt herself up in her plaid, and went and secreted herself behind a large tree, which stood in the garden at the back of the House of Gordon, from which she could observe the bedroom window of Sir Willoughby. It was a cold raw morning; the rain was pouring in torrents, and bursts of distant thunder shook the heavens. In this situation, Margaret sat for two hours, wet, wearied, and disconsolate. Her attention was, in some degree, arrested by a new equipage that stood in the court-yard, apparently newly arrived from a distance; and she concluded that Sir Willoughby had visiters—a prediction which she had good reason to verify. Her eye sought continually the casement of the knight's sleeping apartment, which was at last opened, and to her surprise and mortification, she saw standing behind the dressing glass, the form of a gay and fashionable lady, with Sir Willoughby standing behind her—his head leaning on her left shoulder, and his right hand patting, with playful fondness, her cheek, and arranging her ringlets with the sportive gaiety and confidence of a professed libertine.

Overcome by this apparition, which so completely justified Margaret's suspicions of the character of her lover, and wearied and wasted as she was by the scene of the previous night, the fevered vigil which succeeded, and the cold and wet position she had so long occupied on this morning, she became faint; and, being unable longer to stand, leant herself, in a stooping posture, against the stem of the tree under which she stood. Sir Willoughby now entered the garden; he had observed her from the window, and came with marked displeasure in his countenance.

"Why this early visit, young maiden?" he said, with a querulous tone of voice, and without making any effort to assist her to rise.

"I dinna come here this morning, Sir Willoughby Somerset," replied Margaret, with the warmth of offended pride, and standing up, nerved by her feelings, which were roused as far as the gentleness of her nature permitted—"I dinna come here this morning on my ain account, though maybe I hae as meikle reason to do that as the braw leddie wha sits, even noo, in your sleeping chamber, and whose braw hair ye were pleased, in a fashion of merriment, to put in disorder. Oh, that it had pleased heaven that ye had deranged nae mair o' me than my worthless locks, I might this morning hae been the blithe, thochtless, and innocent Peggy Williamson, that I was when my stray wits left me to mysel' at the Hunter's Rest! Na, Sir Willoughby, I dinna come to tell ye o' your broken troth, and my lost love, and the ruin o' a puir lassie, wha wad gladly hae laid down her worthless life to save yours. These things,—though, by our memories, whilk are but as the quicksand to the finger-marks of the drooning sailor, they may ance be forgotten—are recorded, doubtless, whar' they shall remain, ay, as the graving on adamant. Yet, though these things, in this world at least, concern only me, wha am, doubtless, o' sma concernment to ony living mortal; and though they may cost me *my* life, whilk may be o' sma avail, they are o' less importance to me at this time than what I cam' to tell ye, being naething less than how to save your ain. Adam Hunter has resolved to slay ye this night, as ye gang to Holyrood. Tak' anither road than the Canongate; or, what is better, stay at hame, and save a life that is dearer to PeggyWilliamson than her ain.—Fareweel, fareweel!" And before Sir Willoughby could reply, she had left him, waving her hand to him as she went. But, on looking back, as she opened the door of the garden, she saw the same lady—whom she afterwards ascertained to be Lady Arabella Winford, a person of bad repute, with whom Sir Willoughby had resided for some time on the continent—enter the garden, and greet him in a manner very different from the modest custom of Scotland at that day.

After the departure of Margaret, Sir Willoughby, instead of being in any degree affected by gratitude for the preservation of his life, or by compassion for the kind maiden who had been instrumental in doing him that service, projected, from her information, a scheme marked by cowardice and cruelty, whereby he might get rid of his servant, Richard Forster, and put an end to him and the secrets with which he had entrusted him, at the same moment. He resolved, and true to the character he bore—a combination of cruelty and frivolity—he resolved, amidst the blandishments of meretricious affection, and the imbecile badinage and persiflage of a strumpet's conversation, to send Richard down the Canongate in the evening, wrapped up in his cloak, and wearing his hat and white plume, by which he had become so remarkable. The project was executed as it was planned; and a deed was done with which Edinburgh, and indeed Scotland, rang for many a day. Richard Forster, wearing the cloak and plumed hat of his master, was shot dead in the Canongate, opposite to the house of Widow Hutchison, by the unerring hand of Adam Hunter, who, seeing his supposed victim fall, flew in the direction of the Calton Hill, leaving the gun, with which he had done the deed, lying in a hedge, which at that time skirted a part of the north back of the Canongate.

A hue and cry was soon raised against Adam Hunter, who, about a week after the crime was committed, was laid hold of by the officers of the law, and lodged in prison. Sufficient evidence having, in the opinion of the crown

authorities, been procured for a conviction, the unfortunate man was, in due course of time, brought to trial before the High Court of Justiciary. The court met on the 15th day of November; and Adam Hunter, guarded on each side by members of the City Guard, sat, with the stoical indifference which marked his character, to hear the evidence to be brought forward against him, and, in all probability, to receive sentence of death. The august appearance of the judges, sitting in their black robes, the venerable and even dignified aspect of the unfortunate culprit, and the strange and mysterious crime with which he stood charged, joined with the fate of the well-known Canongate beauty, with which that crime was unaccountably associated, produced a sensation in the Justiciary Court which had not been experienced for many years. The deepest silence prevailed when the indictment was read; and the Lord Justice-Clerk, having put the ordinary question to the pannel of guilty or not guilty, Adam Hunter rose with firmness, and calmly and respectfully answered—"Not guilty, my Lord, of the murder of Richard Forster." The trial proceeded, and the crown advocate spoke:—

"My Lords, and gentlemen of the jury, this is a case of murder, whereto, so far as I can see, no defence or plea of justification, or even palliation, can be set up by the prisoner at the bar, unless it be that which is indeed an aggravation, that he did intend to kill one man against whom he entertained *malice prepense*, and slew another against whom he had no cause of quarrel. On the day preceding the commission of this murder, the prisoner at the bar was, in consequence of his outrageous and brutal conduct in the House of Gordon, occupied at present by Sir Willoughby Somerset, kicked by that honourable knight out of doors, whereby, being fiercely enraged, he impiously vowed a desperate revenge, the which, though he had taken it instanter and killed his enemy, *percitus rixa*, would still, by the just laws of this land, which make no distinction between forethought, felony, and *chaud mella*, have been murder, and sufficient to subject the prisoner to the penal consequences of that heinous crime. But, my Lords, the prisoner cannot even plead *homicidium in rixa*; for he went home and meditated upon his crime; settled deliberately the *modus trucidandi* in cool blood—or, as we say, *sanguine frigida*; and, on the following day, watched, *sanguinem sitiens*, for his victim; and more like a blood-hound, *canis vestigator*, than a human being, deprived him, whom he supposed to be his victim, of life. But revenge is known to be blind, and, instead of his enemy, the prisoner murdered, by shooting him through the body, a person who was not in any degree guilty of having offended him; but who was going about his private affairs, as any of us might have been, unconscious of meriting, standing in no fear of receiving, and knowing no reason for expecting such an awful fate as that which awaited him. This, I say, is an aggravation of the crime of murder, in so far as, while in the ordinary case there may, in man's estimation, be some palliation in consequence of the infliction of an injury—in this there can be none.

The witnesses for the crown were then called. The death of Richard Forster, caused by a shot from a gun, was proved. It was also proved, that the gun found in the hedge was Adam Hunter's. The quarrel with Sir Willoughby Somerset was next established, as also the fact that the deceased wore, on that evening, the dress of his master. The macer of court then called out the name of the next witness, which was that of Margaret Williamson; but, before she had time to make her appearance, Adam Hunter rose from his seat and addressed the court in the following terms:—

"My Lords, it doesna appear to me, that, in the eye o' God, or even in that o' man, it can abide the twitch o' natural reason that a puir bairn should, in ignorance o' the relation whilk she bears to him against whom she is to swear, be entrapped by cunning men o the law, to gie evidence against the life o' him wha gave her life. The veins o' Margaret Williamson are filled wi' my bluid, albeit her heart mayna beat in unison wi' the ordinary feelings o' a bairn to a father; for she, puir thing, has nae knowledge that Adam Hunter is her parent, whom she is bound to love and respect, and therefore she may this day, in that unseemly ignorance whilk I and my wife Janet have imposed upon her, say what at some future time she may repent wi' tears o' bitterness, whilk winna recall to her the parent she has slain. I canna think, therefore, my Lords, that ye can consider it unreasonable in a parent—a character whilk maybe some o' yoursels bear, and, if ye do, oh, think what it is to be doomed by your ain bairn!—that this puir lassie be tauld, before she be examined, that she is bane o' the bane, and flesh o' the flesh, o' him whom she is about to arraign o' murder."

As soon as Adam Hunter had finished his speech, which, delivered with great emphasis, produced a great sensation in all the persons present, who never understood that Margaret Williamson was in any way related to him, the crown counsel stood up and said—

"My Lords, this is an ingenious device, on the part of the prisoner at the bar, to deprive the law of its evidence. This girl, who is about to be brought forward as a witness, has been held out to the world as an orphan—a fact that may be testified by hundreds of persons, and is, indeed, admitted by the culprit himself. The story now fabricated by the prisoner is, indeed, improbable—as what father would deny his child? I cannot, therefore, consent to allow any communication to be made to the witness, whereby the fountain of evidence may be contaminated by prejudice, and truth itself sacrificed to the false feelings and hysterical emotions of a relationship which, in my opinion, has no foundation in fact."

The judges, having disbelieved the statement of Adam Hunter, refused to comply with his request. Margaret Williamson was, accordingly, brought in and placed in the witnesses' box. Upon being examined, she gave, in evidence, the substance of the conversation which took place between Adam Hunter and Simon Frazer on that night when the death of Sir Willoughby Somerset was resolved upon. She was then asked whether she had, between that period and the death of Richard Forster, any communication with Sir Willoughby; but to this question she refused to give any answer, or rather she, by the effect of her simplicity—in this instance, however, made subservient to something approaching to cunning—so completely baffled the men of law that they were obliged to give up the question in despair.

On the part of Adam Hunter, an attempt was made to prove an alibi; but that having failed, the jury, upon the charge of the judge, who considered the crime proved, returned a verdict of guilty, and Adam Hunter received sentence of death.

The speech which Adam Hunter had made on the occasion of his trial, as already said, excited much sensation; and the truth of the fact stated by him was subjected to investigation. It was found to be perfectly true, though no notice is taken of it in the books of adjournal. Margaret Williamson was the illegitimate child of Adam Hunter, by the daughter of Elspet Craig, who died in giving birth to the infant; and it was to gratify the prejudices of Janet Hunter, who refused to bring up the child on any other condition, that the parentage had been so industrously concealed.

The unfortunate Adam Hunter was executed according to his sentence. At the time of his execution, considerable uproar was observed among the populace, who, displaying the usual shrewdness of the lower orders in Scotland, perceived that, although Adam could not be justified, he was only one of the actors in the tragedy; and that, while their unfortunate countryman was expiating his crime by an igno-

minious death, the English knight, whose enmity towards Richard Forster, and shameful conduct towards Adam's daughter, were now generally known, was allowed to escape.

The rumours thus circulated by the crowd at the execution of Adam Hunter were not unknown to the crown officers, who felt the force of the extraordinary circumstance, that Richard Forster should, on that fatal night, have worn the clothes of his master. That fact was, moreover, in a considerable degree, explained by another, which had been elicited from one of Sir Willoughby's servants, of the name of William Evans, viz. that Sir Willoughby and Richard had had a quarrel, which produced high words between the parties, and some threats on the part of the knight. The crown officers were, besides, moved by the curious circumstance, that Margaret Williamson had so artfully evaded the question put to her on the occasion of the trial of Adam Hunter; while it was almost impossible to believe that she would not have communicated to Sir Willoughby the plot that was laid for his life, notwithstanding of the injury she had received by being made the victim of his seduction.

A warrant was accordingly issued for the apprehension of Sir Willoughby Somerset. He was found by the officers in the company of Lady Arabella Winford, torn from her arms, and lodged in jail. The charge against him was the murder of Richard Forster, perpetrated by his having, *sciens et prudens*, sent him where death awaited him. Application was, in the meantime, again made by the crown officers to Margaret Williamson, for information as to whether she had had any communication with Sir Willoughby on the day on which Richard Forster was slain. Margaret's answers were still of an evasive character, and her examinators left her, stating that they would visit her again, and use some other means of extorting the truth. Before this threat was put in execution, the knight, having heard that Margaret was in the hands of the examinators, overcome by fear and cowardice, and indulging the mean and despicable hope of being able to persuade his victim to save his life a second time, still without rendering her justice, sent for her to visit him in prison—a request with which she instantly complied.

"My fair Margaret," commenced the knight, "I have sent for thee to know what are still thy feelings towards one who loves thee, and now requires some aid and consolation, such as only thou canst render him. I flatter myself that, at one time, I was not indifferent to thee; and, if my present peril were past, (and thou art the arbiter of my fate,) I may find a suitable opportunity of shewing thee that I still love thee as fervently as I did when I used to meet thee, by the light of the moon, at the Hunter's Rest. I understand that my persecutors have been with thee, and it is my pleasure to be informed, from thy own fair lips, that it is not thy intention to communicate to them what passed between thee and me in my garden, on the day of the death of my worthless servant."

"I didna think," replied Margaret, with calmness and dignity, "that Sir Willoughby Somerset could hae sae far mistaken the heart of Margaret Williamson as to hae found, in the compass o' his ain, any doubt sufficient to cause him to put that question to her. Aince already hae I saved your life, and I would be laith to throw that awa now which I had before sae meikle pains—though, wae's my heart! sae little thanks or reward—to preserve. Na, na; let the officers of the law tak' their course—mine has been lang fixed; and a' the hand-screws and stocks o' Scotland, and even the black wuddy itsel', winna wrest frae me sae meikle as would injure a single hair o' your head. It may be that I only preserve ye for the love o' anither; but I will at least hae that satisfaction—and it is better to the broken heart than a fause love that has now nae power to bind it—that I hae rendered, as our holy religion inculcates, good for evil."

These sentiments only interested or concerned Sir Willoughby in so far as they told him that the fair maiden would not betray him. He mistook entirely the Scotch character generally; and he had not himself any of those high-minded qualities which could enable him to appreciate Margaret's. Betrayed, by her determination to do justice to her own standard of female duty, into an idea that the sacrifices she had thrown, and was again to throw, on the shrine of that duty which she had, in her fervid imagination deified, were mere indications of a wish to oblige and conciliate him, Sir Willoughby thought he might safely go a step farther, and endeavour to wring out of her the written promise of marriage he had so unguardedly given her. He began by using some more of the bland language by which he had originally beguiled her; but he had scarcely approached the subject on which her mind was fixed, when Margaret, with the perspicacity of her sex in these tender points, interrupted him; and, raising herself to the utmost extent of her height, while the fire flashed from her dark blue eye, said—

"If ye can tak' frae me the burden o' shame I hae carried for six moons under my broken heart, and restore to me my lost repute, aince pure as the snaw that the winds o' heaven hae driven o'er muir and mountain, and tear from my puir crazy brain the image I hae made an idol o', and on whose unholy altar I hae sacrificed my maiden virtue—and maybe that eternal life that hasna been promised to the trafficker in sin—then, Sir Willoughby, ye may ask me for that whilk stands to me in the place of ane haly covenant, and is the only solace left to bind up my broken spirit, and be a sign and a token to your bairn whom I hae yet to bear, that its puir mother, though doubtless guilty o' a great sin, was the victim o' a knight's broken troth, and maybe entitled to a drap o' mercy in her burning cup. Tell me, Sir, to keep frae the officers of the law the secret that would bring ye to a shamefu' death, and I will part wi' it as sune as I will part wi' the written testimonial of what a merciful God, and the less merciful laws o' my countrie, may, peradventure, deal wi' as ane haly bond o' matrimony."

With these words, Margaret abruptly left the prison, and Sir Willoughby, concerned only for his liberation, denied access to his heart to the sentiments which reflected so much honour on the feelings of his victim, from whom he was entitled to expect nothing but revenge.

Margaret was soon again visited by the officers of the law; but she remained firm to her resolution, not to say anything tending to implicate Sir Willoughby. Recourse was therefore had, according to the usages of that period, to the ordinary mode of dealing with an unwilling witness. She was now told, that, as a person refractory and disobedient to the laws of her country, she must go to prison, where the means of extorting her withholden testimony would be more in the power of the crown officials. She was, accordingly, conveyed to the prison in which Sir Willoughby was confined, and intimation was solemnly made to her, that, on the following morning, she would be subjected to the rack of the thumbikins. The threat was fulfilled with fidelity and vigour. On the first application of this cruel instrument, the poor girl screamed with agony; but the unstability of her frame, attenuated and weakened by her previous sufferings, and her pregnancy, loosened, under the effect of the torture, that connection between agony and resolution, without which all tortured methods of extorting testimony must be unavailing Every increased pressure produced an agonized scream, succeeded by a state of insensibility, or faint, which these deluded searchers for truth had as much difficulty in bringing her out of, as they had in producing. The torture continued to be applied, at stated intervals, for days, and the screams of the unfortunate maiden could not fail to find their way to the ears, if not to the heart, of the wretch by whom her sufferings had been occasioned. Little impression, however, was produced on Margaret's resolution to die with her secret; and upon the

occasion of one application of the instrument, the syncope produced had so long a period of duration, that the medical man who was present declared that it could not be applied again without danger of producing death.

The officers were now inclined to allow the period of Margaret's pregnancy to pass before they again applied the instrument—a circumstance of rather an anomalous nature in the proceedings of these lovers of truth; for a true medical philalethes would naturally have conceived, that the weaker the habit of the patient, the more certain was the chance of a recovery. In the meantime, however, a circumstance came to the ears of the king's prosecutor, which induced him to relax his energies in the prosecution of Sir Willoughby. Several of his servants now declared, (no doubt by the aid of concealed bribery,) that Richard Forster was in the habit of attiring himself in his master's garments, and personating him in the prosecution of amours. In addition to this, Janet Hunter, though called upon, could not swear that Margaret Williamson had stirred from the house on the day of the murder. Unable to force Margaret to speak, and influenced by the testimony of these witnesses, the public prosecutor came to the resolution of liberating Sir Willoughby, and the knight was accordingly let out of gaol.

Within a few hours after his liberation, he was on his way to England, in company with Lady Arabella. He had devoted the whole period of his imprisonment to writing letters to her, and venting curses against Scotland. Margaret Williamson was forgotten, in the hope of finding in the arms of Lady Arabella a panacea for his wrongs, and a solace of his sufferings—for it is as true as it is remarkable, that the truly wicked are the most querulous of justice, and the most impatient of her retributions.

Nothing was, for a long time, heard of Sir Willoughby; but she whom he had ruined and deserted, remained to the inhabitants of Edinburgh as an object of their pity, and an example to their children. Margaret bore a son, and Janet Hunter soon died of a broken heart, for the loss of Adam. Margaret was thus left to the charity of a world which is often moved to pity only through the selfish conceit of a comparison between the alms-giver and the alms-receiver, and begged her bread from the doors of the inhabitants of Edinburgh.

Five years after the transactions now detailed, and when King James had been nearly as long seated on the throne of England, Lionel Apsley, a gentleman in the confidence of the king, arrived in Edinburgh. He was observed to make inquiries after a person of the name of Margaret or Peggy Williamson, who, he was informed, resided in a small ground room in the White Horse Close, in the Canongate of Edinburgh. A man who was standing at the top of Leith Wynd took him to Margaret's residence. Upon entering the humble abode, he found the object of his search making porridge for the son of the English knight. Lionel entered into conversation with Margaret, and endeavoured to draw her into a recital of the story of her life; but she evaded, though in the gentlest manner, his efforts, stating, that her griefs and her secrets were her own, and that the making the one known would not make the other unfelt. She had been much annoyed, she said, by the impertinent interrogations of gossiping people, who often insulted her by withholding their charity when they found their love of gossip ungratified.

Lionel made many visits to Margaret, and, by degrees, succeeded in breaking down her reluctance to speak of herself. He told her, that he had been commissioned to visit her, and had come down to Scotland for the sole purpose of seeing and serving her, and pledged his honour, as a gentleman, that the only use he would make of her information would be in turning it to her advantage. He was evidently already well acquainted with many parts of her story; but the chief object of his inquiry related to the written promise of marriage which, he had been given to understand, she had got from Sir Willoughby. Margaret, at first, would not admit that any such document existed, and appeared to feel acute pain from Lionel's urgent solicitation to see it. Overcome, at last, by his importunity, she went to a little chest, which was secreted in a recess dug into the wall of her apartment, and having drawn it out, and opened it with trembling hands, she took from it the small, but curiously folded piece of paper, still retaining the fragrance with which Sir Willoughby's gallantry had invested it. With convulsive sobs, Margaret looked at the paper, and handed it to the stranger. Lionel read it, and found it to contain the following words, written in a small affected character, which bore evident traces of having been penned by the writer when in a state bordering at least on intoxication. "Sir Willoughby Somerset, of Somerset Hall, knight of the noble order of—(here there was drawn a rude image of George and the dragon)—doth, by these lines, declare that he doth truly intend to wed Margaret Williamson, and this he promises to do on the faith of a knight of the order to which he belongs. Given at the Hunter's Rest, this 26th day of April, in the year of the succession of King James to the throne of England."

This document Lionel copied, and having returned the original to Margaret, he asked her if she would accompany him to London.

"If it be to meet Sir Willoughby Somerset," answered she, "I will sooner walk to the graves o' Sir Patrick Spence and the Scottish lords wha lie between Leith and Aberdour."

"It is not to meet Sir Willoughby, my fair maiden," said Sir Lionel; "and if thou wilt trust to the honour of one who is not a knight, I promise thee thou shalt not have cause to regret thy journey."

After much solicitation, Margaret agreed to go to London, and take her child with her; and Lionel having got her equipped in a manner so as to escape observation, they departed for London, where they arrived after ten days travelling. On their arrival, Margaret and her child were taken to respectable lodgings, where she was requested to remain till Lionel called for her.

After some days, a coach drove up to the door, and a lady carrying a bundle, came out, and asked to be shewn to the apartment occupied by the Scotch lady. This was the wife of Lionel, who brought with her a number of specimens of tartan, which she exhibited to Margaret, requesting her to point out the kind she wore when she lived with Adam Hunter. This Margaret did; and the next request made by the lady was, that Margaret should describe to her the shape of the garment, and the manner in which she wore it; all of which Margaret complied with, and the lady departed.

In two days more, the same lady called with the garment made, and requested Margaret to put it on, and, with the child, accompany her to the place where she was going. Margaret complied, and they departed together in the coach. After driving for some little time, the coach stopped at a large house, into which they entered. The lady led Margaret and her child up a great many stairs, and round winding passages, until they came to a room, where she was requested to remain. After waiting about ten minutes, a gentleman of a fair complexion entered, and shook her kindly by the hand, launching, at the same time, and without any explanation, into a quick spoken and confused speech, which formed a part of his salutation.

"Why, woman, didna ye mak' some legal use o the bit paper ye got frae your braw lover, Sir Willoughby Somerset? Can it be possible that ye dinna ken, that, by the law o' your country, a promise o' marriage, coupled wi' a—a—hem! hem!—a bairn, is, to a' intents and purposes, as gude a marriage as if it were celebrated wi' a' the solemnities o' haly kirk? By my royal troth, ye hae been a blate and silly

lassie, whatever folk may say o' ye, praising ye for the hich and michtie honour ye made sae meikle fashion o', to save the life o' a nc'er-do-weel villain, wha ruined ye, and slew his servant, and cheated the wuddy o' my countrie, though made o' gude aik, a mair suitable wife to him, God wot, than the like o' ye. But lat that alane—*tempus reparabit*—ha! ha! ye ken naething o' Latin, I fancy, but I meant only by that flicht to tell ye that ye will be revenged."

While in the act of delivering this strange speech, the gentleman began to drag Margaret, somewhat rudely, out of the room where they were, into another; his speech and the dragging operation going on at the same time. She now found herself in a large hall, where she saw an elevated chair, overshaded by a canopy of crimson velvet, on the top of which was a crown. The gentleman, still in the same confused manner—speaking sometimes to himself, and sometimes to her—shoved her behind a small screen, apparently placed there for the purpose of concealing some one, telling her to remain there until she was called for.

The folding-doors of the apartment now opened, and Margaret heard the voices of heralds, and saw a great number of high-dressed ladies and gentlemen come in, and stand round the elevated chair. Among these, she observed Sir Willoughby Somerset, and a lady (the same she had seen in the garden of the House of Gordon) leaning upon his arm. "Come forth, Margaret Williamson," cried the gentleman who had first spoken to her; and Margaret, with her tartan plaid around her, and her child at her foot, stood before King James. Opposite to her, stood Sir Willoughby Somerset and his lady, dressed in the most gorgeous style, and forming a strange and striking contrast with the plaided stranger.

"I am right glad," said James, "to see my auld subjects o' my native kingdom; and I greet ye weel, Peggy Williamson, and wish ye and your bairn mony braw days. I also greet ye weel, Sir Willoughby Somerset, Knight, and your braw leddie, wha is, nevertheless, only your wife, in sae meikle as she is nearest your heart, in the fashion o' the connection whilk exists between our auld Scotch wuddy and the heart o' Mid-Loudon. But awa' wi' this—*Et nunc labores exantlare*—whilk means, to wark, to wark. Ken ye this Scotch lassie, Sir Willoughby Somerset?"

"No, Sire," answered the Knight, in evident confusion, but still retaining a portion of his natural impudence.

"It's fause, Sir," answered the King, whose choler now rose to the boiling point of his royal fervour—"It's fause, Sir; ye ken her as weel as did our royal faither our royal mither, or as Hamman did his wuddy, whilk was made o' sweet-smelling cedar, as is clearly made out by the learned Chrysostem. I canna believe you; for our royal brither Solomon hath said, that if a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants shall be wicked. But, maybe, ye may ken your ain handwriting, better than ye do the lassie. Look at that, man; do ye ken that?"

Sir Willoughby was silent.

"I will take your silence, man, for an ill-favoured confession; and now, Sir, let it be understood by ye, that that bit writing and that bit callant—wha doesna ken ye sae weel as ye ken his mither—maks a gude marriage by the law o' Scotland. I dinna mean, Sir, in the presence o' this assembly, to disgrace ye, mair than will serve the purposes o' justice; and I leave ye to reflect, if ye hae sic a thing about ye as reflection, how ye treated this puir lassie, wham ye ruined, and wha, though fire, and famine, and death, and scorpions, are given, as Ecclesiasticus says, for vengeance, sat quietly and sucked, wi' her honied lips, (seeking nae mair satisfaction,) the poison which your shaft carried to her broken heart; and wha, though exposed to terrible and racking tortures, saved, on twa occasions, your life, regardless o' her ain. Now, Sir, though the lassie can claim ye as her husband, she alone has the power o' severing that connection, on the ground o' your cohabitation wi' that leddie, wham ye call your wife; whilk power, by my advice, she will doubtless exercise. But, Sir, there maun here be a *solatium*; and I ask you if ye are willing to sign that paper whilk Lionel Apsley is ready to shaw ye."

Sir Willoughby took the document, which purported to be a conveyance to Margaret Williamson, in liferent, and her son, in fee, of one-half of the domain of Somerset Hall, calculated to amount to £5000 a-year; and, having read it, he seemed to hesitate to sign it. During his hesitation, James whispered in his ear, the name of Richard Forster. His manner changed, and he signed the deed.

Margaret Williamson received the deed from the King, giving, in return, one of her best curtsies. She came down to Scotland, prosecuted a divorce against Sir Willoughby Somerset, and lived a much honoured and respected lady, in Edinburgh, for many years.

THE MYSTERIOUS EXCHANGE.

In the reign of King James VI., there lived, in that part of Edinburgh called the Luckenbooths, a person of the name of Richard Morton, who followed the trade of a dyer—a man of somewhat eccentric habits, but, withal, honest and well-meaning, and generally respected. His shop, or rather booth, was remarkable, in consequence of a sign-board which hung over it, displaying a rainbow thrown over a chameleon; a device of Richard's, which he thought exceedingly well contrived for telling the public the nature of his calling, though not, perhaps, his means of living—for Richard, unlike the type of his trade, could neither produce his colours nor sustain his life by means of air, the food of the chameleon, any more than by mere sunshine and water, the elements of the rainbow. His wife, whose maiden name was Jean Gibson, was a decent and thrifty woman. They had been married for a period of ten years without having had any children, a circumstance which, in some degree, was suffered to interfere with their happiness. But even this slight obstacle to absolute contentment was destined to be removed earlier than the parties themselves anticipated; though fortune, in giving the boon which had been by them fervently prayed for, chose to attach, as she is often pleased to do, a condition to the gift, of a nature so singular as to suggest the idea that she intended to get quit of her reputation for inconsistency, by exhibiting, in this instance, a uniformity in her singularity.

A servant maid was the only other member of Richard's family—a person as respectable, in every respect, as her master and mistress, though now in a servile condition. This person's name was Elizabeth, or, as she was generally called, Betty Walker. She had been married to a seafaring person of the name of Gideon Walker, to whom she bore a son, about six months after the death of Gideon, who was lost at sea. The son, to whom she gave the name of Robert, a boy of about ten years of age, was living with an uncle in Kirkaldy, who had kindly undertaken to bring him up, and thus enable Betty Walker to earn an industrious livelihood by taking a respectable place. Betty was what was termed in Scotland "a godly woman," that is, a religious well-living person; and perhaps she carried her love of religion somewhat into the dark and mysterious regions of fanaticism, an error common in times of religious reformation, and without which, indeed, such reformation could seldom be vigorously effected. Imbued with the spirit of the times, Betty's love to Christ and hatred to the Pope vied with each other in point of intensity, receiving much strength from each other, and both fed to a state of repletion by the harangues of the spiritual Quixotes who were so numerous in her day, and whose works it was difficult to characterise as more for good than for evil.

This good and faithful servant had been in the service of Richard Morton for seven years; and, having the interest of her master and mistress at her heart as much as her own, she often prayed that the blessing of a child might be vouchsafed to their wishes. The faith of Betty was justified by an event which afforded food for the gossiping, and hope to the barren inhabitants of the Luckenbooths for many days. Jean Morton was declared to be pregnant, and, in a short time, presented her loving and delighted husband with a boy.

About three weeks after the birth of this child, Richard Morton, with the view of giving his wife her first airing, took her out to the Meadows—a favourite resort for the inhabitants of Edinburgh—leaving the child under the care and protection of Elizabeth Walker. The child was lying in its crib asleep, while Elizabeth was reading her Bible. Hearing some commotion, she looked out and saw a favourite preacher holding forth from a window, on the other side of the street. Any resistance which the care of the babe, or any other motive however strong, could oppose to the charms of Gideon Henderson's discourse, was but as a feather in the blast, and Elizabeth joined the crowd to listen to the sermon, leaving the door of the house open.

When the discourse was finished, she returned to her charge, sat down by the side of the cradle, and resumed her Bible. Richard Morton and Jean having finished their walk, came home, and a mother's care suggested an immediate inspection of the beloved little stranger.

" What's this, what's this, in the name of heaven !" ejaculated Mrs Morton, as she held up in her hands a changeling.

Richard and Elizabeth ran up to her, surprised at the unearthly sound of her ejaculation, or rather yell.

" This is no my bairn, Elizabeth Walker," continued the distracted mother. " Gie me my bairn, wham I hae prayed for, travailed for, and nearly dee'd for. I left him wi' ye, and I demand an account of your precious charge." She threw the little changeling in the crib, and crying " Whar is he?—whar is he?" flew out of the house.

Amazed and confounded by this sudden, wild, and extravagant demeanour of his wife, and seeing, at the same time, strong alarm, approaching to despair, painted on the face of the servant, Richard stood like a statue fixed to the floor. " What is this, in the name o' God?" he cried, and running up to the cradle, soon discovered the cause of his wife's frenzy. A female child presented itself to the astonished parent; but a hope at the same moment flashed across him. " Hoot awa, Elizabeth, woman; this is a dangerous trick, an' no very like the action o' a sober disciple o' Gideon Henderson. Gang awa', woman, and bring back the wean, and tell Jean to come into the house, and let's hae nae mair o't."

Poor Elizabeth stood in the middle of the floor, with her eyes and mouth at the fullest stretch of their capacity, her hands upheld in the attitude of prayer—a perfect personification of despair. She was incapable of uttering a single syllable, seemed not to understand what Richard said, and rolled her eyes about, like a person out of her reason. Richard's alarm returned. He shook Elizabeth violently, to make her speak; but all he could get out of her was, " Eh! eh! the bairn! what said ye aboot the bairn?"

Richard now ran out after his wife, whom he found in the middle of the street, with a crowd gathered round her, who could not understand a single word she said. Some supposed that the joy produced by the child, had put her out of her senses, and recommended to Richard to take her home and soothe her. Richard had now presence of mind enough to give an intelligible account of the cause of his wife's emotion; and the strange circumstance of an exchange of children, effected in broad day, excited the curiosity of the crowd to such an extent, that hundreds dispersed in all directions to spread the intelligence, and endeavour to discover the perpetrators of the crime. Richard and his wife returned, with many of the neighbours, to the house, where they found Betty a little more collected, but still much excited. They pressed her to tell all that had taken place during the absence of Richard and his wife; and when she informed them that she had been out hearing Gideon Henderson, and had left the door of the house open, a part of the mystery was explained.

All search for the missing child was in vain. The only thing like a trace that could be got, was in the information of a servant of Sir David Hamilton of Redcastle, who lived in a flat above Richard's shop. This woman, whose name was Eliza or Lizzy Gilchrist, stated that she saw a man, with a bundle in his hand, run out of Richard's house, down the High Street, and get into a coach which was standing opposite to the Parliament House, and immediately drive off at full speed.

The disconsolate parents soon gave up all hopes of again getting their child. The little unknown soon claimed and received their affections. She was christened Helen, carried the name of her imputed parents, and treated, in every respect, as if her personality had been that of the little Morton who had been carried no person knew whither. Betty Walker continued in her office of servant and nurse; for though some ill-disposed people hinted some things about the improbability of Betty's story, Richard and his wife, and indeed every person that knew her real character, believed her to be entirely innocent of any connection with the cause of the misfortune.

As Helen grew up under the hands of Betty, who treated her with the greatest kindness, she displayed as much affection for her as for Mrs Morton. The mystery that hung over the exchange, endeared her to Betty, who could not divest herself of the idea, that their fates were connected by an unseen hand. She could not conceive that a circumstance so unaccountable could be the act of any power lower than Him of whom the prophet has said, " To whom hath he given power to declare his works, and who shall also tell out his mercies," &c. She felt herself to be the instrument in the hand of God in accomplishing what, notwithstanding of appearances, would ultimately be explained for good, " in such an hour as they thought not."

" Helen is as fond of ye, Betty, as she is o' mysel," Mrs Morton would sometimes say; " and, indeed, so she may, for ye had as muckle to do wi' the the getting o' her as I had."

" She canna like me better than I like her, answered Betty; for I like her as weel as I do my ain Robin, wha never saw his faither, wham God assoilzie. But wha would na like a puir creature, wha has come amang us like a stranger frae a distant land, nae doubt by a high commission? Doesna the prophet say, ' The father waketh for the daughter when no man knoweth, and the care for her taketh away sleep?' But she has nae father and nae mither, and though, doubtless, ye are kind aneugh to her, she will be naething the waur o' the kindness o' Betty Walker. I canna help thinking—for ye ken it has been written, ' that the heart fancieth, as a woman's heart in travail'—that little Helen will some day be raised up as a horn o' salvation for me when I am in trouble; for the Lord is marvellous in his workings, and in his power, and her appearance amang us was marvellous aneugh. They were bauld to throw awa' so bonny a bairn; but I hope to be yet able to say, that they ' put their money to the exchangers, and when they come back they shall receive it with usury.' "

(To be continued.)

WILSON'S
Historical, Traditionary, and Imaginative
TALES OF THE BORDERS.

THE MYSTERIOUS EXCHANGE.

(Concluded.)

Helen grew up to be a very beautiful girl, possessed of a noble spirit. Her blue laughing eye twinkled through a profusion of auburn hair, which fell down upon her shoulders; her pure complexion of pearly white set off, as a bed of lilies does some straggling roses, the beautiful tints of her cheeks and lips, which seemed to be ever on the watch for an opportunity of giving expression, in their different modes, to some feeling of gaiety and hilarity; and her tall ttately form, erect as a poplar, and as pliable and yielding to the influence of a conception of grace and beauty of motion, as that beautiful tree is to the summer breeze, completed the fair figure of Helen Morton, who soon attracted, by the force of such fascinations, the eyes of all who beheld her.

"Tak' tent o' yersel', now, my bonny Helen," said Betty to her one day, as she was dressing herself; "keep yersel' for a bonny living sacrifice for the altar o' pure and honourable love. Keep out o' the way o' Sandy Hamilton, wha is as impious as Nicanor, and as cunning as the serpent, that is bound, by its subtle nature, to crawl about and deceive. Tak' heed o' him, my bonny bird, lest ye perish like Zacharias, between the altar and the temple, and leave nae token, but that o' shame, and the death o' puir Betty Walker, wha winna survive your dishonour."

"An' wha tauld ye o' Sandy Hamilton?" answered Helen, playfully, patting Betty, whom she loved as a mother, on the cheek; "and wherefore hae ye sae ill an opinion o' him? I'm sure he's weel-favoured, and his faither is the braw Sir David, our next neibour;" and she looked, as she said the words, into the glass.

"And it is just because he is the son o' the braw Sir David, that I object to him," replied Betty. "Ye are but as a young fig-tree—'when its branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that simmer is nigh.' O Helen! Helen! if ye trust that faithless man, it winna be a bonny simmer that will come to your leaves and to your buds, to to bring them out and change them into fair flowers; but a cauld winter, to nip and wither them, and bring desolation on the tree, and the auld and faithfu' friends who hoped to shelter themselves under its thick leaves and spreading branches."

Betty would have proceeded in this strain for an hour, if Helen had not run up to her and kissed her into silence, promising that she would not again see Sandy Hamilton.

This person was the son of Sir David Hamilton, already mentioned. He was a young man who had been brought up in the neighbourhood, his father's home being immediately above Richard Morton's shop. He was bred for the bar, and had been for two years on the continent, in conformity with a singular practice of that period, to send young Scotch lawyers there to learn the laws of their own country. Alexander Hamilton, at least, learned the mode of contravening those laws—an accomplishment which is to this day reckoned a part of a continental education. His manners were polished; but extreme and ungovernable passions came upon him, like whirlwinds; and, though he had been better provided than he was with a proper principle of resistance and restraint, the strength and violence of these would have left the moral part of his nature a wreck capable only of giving some power to a conscience which had hitherto slept. His loves and hatreds were equally strong; and whether the one or the other wrought the greater evil, was a problem of difficult solution. His prospects were high, as his father was a favourite at the Palace; but it was then, as it is now, that dissipation seldom crosses the path to honour, and Hamilton had the promise of being made, very soon after he passed, a deputy to the advocate of the crown. He had, besides, the prospect of succeeding to a very large estate in the north country, known by the name of Eskdale, which its proprietor, in consequence of some distant relationship, had agreed to leave to the heirs of the body of Sir David Hamilton. This property was worth not less than £6000 a-year, while Sir David's property did not yield above a sixth-part of that sum. These prospects produced in young Hamilton a high spirit of pride and domination, which was only wanting to make his character unqualifiedly repulsive.

The amiable and beautiful Helen Morton could not pass unobserved by young Hamilton. In consequence of the proximity of their residences, they were daily and hourly in each other's eyes. A kind look introduced a word of speech, and conversation brought on an intimacy, which, in its turn, produced, as it generally does among young and sensitive creatures, that freit of natural sorcery—love. The place they generally resorted to for a meeting was at the Twin-tree, an old double trunk of a thorn which stood, blasted and solitary, at the edge of the North Loch, well known as a trysting place to the inhabitants of the Luckenbooths, and possessing a reputation of having a supernatural influence on the affections of the couple who sat together between its rugged stems. The reputation of the power of the Twin-tree stood, as often happens with objects of a more elevated character than a tree, in the place of the power itself, and produced as sterling amatory effects—as many love matches and marriages—as if there really had been a true sympathetic influence in the thorn itself. They would have been an eccentric pair, who, sitting in the magic cleft, and knowing and believing in its amatory witchery, could have philosophically resisted the hidden and mysterious influence.

It very soon became known to Richard Morton and his wife, and to Betty Walker, that Helen Morton was in the habit of walking at night with young Hamilton, whose character had become notorious about the town for all kinds of debauchery; while Betty was deeply mortified to find that her kind and motherly expostulation with Helen, already alluded to, had produced no effect. Another person was interested in this affair. Betty Walker's son, Robert, now a merchant in Kirkaldy, and a very excellent and reputable person, as well as a kind and affectionate son, had been in the habit of coming across the Forth once a-week, to see his mother; and there is little doubt that a part of his errand was also to see Helen, who had smitten him with a strong passion. He had procured the consent of Richard Morton to pay his addresses to her, and entreated his mother to do what lay in her power to bring about a union. He was now in a condition to keep a wife, and he had offered to relieve his parent of her servitude, which, however, she declined, on the ground of an obligation under which she thought heaven had placed her to watch over the interests of Helen.

When Robert understood that Helen had been in the habit of meeting young Hamilton, he was sorely vexed and disappointed. He could have stood a fair competition with

an honest person in Helen's station; but to be cut out by a rake, who would snatch the prey, only to kill it, and throw it away like a useless weed, was a thought he could scarcely bear.

"What can I do, my dear mither," said Robert to Betty, one night, when they were sitting together, waiting for the arrival of Helen, who, it was suspected, was away with her lover—"What can I do, or what can you do, to put a stop to this dreadful connection, which can have nae issue save the ruin o' the bonniest lassie that ever cam' within the reach of St Giles' bells? Could Richard no employ force to keep her in, or send her frae hame for some time, until the glamour be taen frae her een, and her virtue placed beyond the reach o' the contaminating breath o' a villain?"

"O Robin, Robin!" answered Betty, in the fulness of grief, "the death o' your faither, and the pains o' bearing ye, wha hae a thousand times repaid them, were naething to the bitterness and agony I hae groaned under for the dementit backsliding—if I may use that word—o' my bonny Helen. Often hae I sat and wondered what could be the intention o' Him wha worketh, as Baruch wrote, with a 'mighty hand and high arm, and with signs and with wonders,' in causing my heart to yearn towards this bairn, as it has done to him wham I hae travailed for;—and noo to see her wandering frae the path I hae, from the blessed book, pointed out to her tottering steps, like ane under the thrall o' Satan. It's an awfu' thought, Robin, and maks me often cry with the prophet—'Look upon all the works of the Most High, and there are two and two, one against another.' But I haena yet gien up a' thoughts o' saving my winsome Helen; for the clay is still in the potter's hand, to fashion it at his pleasure. It is my present intention to ca' upon the young man, wha has gane doun to the pit, and endeavour to bring him to whar 'the woods, and every sweet smelling tree, overshadow Israel.'"

Robert had no hope from the resolution of his mother, and endeavoured to dissuade her from her purpose. But it was in vain that he interfered; for she had made up her mind, and it was seldom that she changed her resolution after forming it. In the present instance, she told her son that she felt as strong in her cause as if she held in her hand the sword of gold which Jeremias gave to Judas; and some days afterwards she called at the house of Sir David Hamilton, and asked to see the young master. She was shewn into a room, where young Hamilton was sitting writing a thesis, with a view to becoming one of the faculty. On seeing her enter, his brow became clouded, for he knew her; and in an angry and even violent manner, he asked her what she wanted with him. Betty said she wanted to say a few words to him about Helen Morton.

"And what hast thou got to say to me about that maiden? Thou art neither her mother nor her legal guardian, thou brainwud old hag; and I am not to be annoyed by thy religious cant, for which, in its application to me, thou hast no authority but thine own impudence."

"Ye may think it a great and michtie thing, Sir," answered Betty, roused by the stripling's impious and imbecile speech, "to pour out the vessels o' your wrath upon the head o' an auld woman, wha has had ye on her knee, and ance saved your life frae the crushing wheels o' a chariot; but neither your words, nor your looks, nor your deeds, have ony power to produce in Betty Walker sae meikle fear as wad shake a garland o' aspens on the head o' a sinner. A yoke and a collar may bow the neck, but the heart that is anointed wi' holy oil, careth nothing for them. I hae as meikle authority to do my best for the salvation o' the chosen o' my heart—for my bonny Helen Morton—as ye can hae for betraying her into the dark gulph o' sin. She was intrusted to my keeping by an unseen hand; and, obedient to the commission with which I, as an humble instrument, hae been found worthy o', I hae poured into her young heart that knowledge whilk is abune the wisdom o this earth. I hae kept her feet frae stumbling, and, till ye knew her, her ways frae erring. I hae learned her that the light o' the body is the ee—whilk, being sinfu', the whole body maun be fu' o' darkness—wi' the intention to prevent her frae being charmed wi' the like o' ye, wha dress yersels wi' purple and gold to deceive and betray, unmindfu that frae garments cometh a moth. If ye were even able to conceive the thought o' my poor heart, ye wad, peradventure, ken that the mair power men hae, and the mair learning they are blessed wi', the mair they ought to glory in protecting the weak, and sheltering unsuspecting innocence, frae the devices o' the perfidious and the ungodly. And dinna think, Sir, that this high power, which is, nae doubt, gien for wise ends, can be abused without the knowledge o' Him wha gave it; for the time will come when every man's heart shall tell him mair than seven watchmen, and wo be to him whose condemning heart is racked wi' sleepless remorse for the maiden innocence he has ruined, and the spotless spirit he has barbarously crushed and broken!"

Betty delivered this speech to the young rake with much animation, notwithstanding many attempts, on his part, to interrupt her. She turned to depart with a sorrowful heart, for she saw she had made but little impression upon young Hamilton. The only answer he made her was a request to be gone; and, as she shut the door, she heard him uttering loud oaths, and calling her old witch and beldame, fit only for the stake or the pulpit.

On returning to the house, Betty informed her son of the reception she had got from Hamilton, from which there seemed to be little doubt that Helen was in the hands of a villain. This fact soon became more apparent; for Helen one night departed from the house, and no one knew whither she had gone. Poor Betty went about in every direction; but neither she nor Robert could find any trace of her Richard Morton and his wife, though sorely distressed for the loss of Helen, did not feel the poignancy of grief which seized upon poor Betty, who took to bed under an attack of brain fever, where she lay for three months. During this time, she was attended with all the assiduity of a sick-nurse, and all the kindness of an excellent son, by Robert, who left her only at intervals to attend to his business at Kirkaldy. The disease had been produced by the shock occasioned by the loss of Helen, whose name she continually uttered in her ravings; and, when she got better, in her prayers. When she was finally recovered, she left the house of Richard Morton, the object of her affections being no longer there, and went and lived in a small room in the Pleasance, having expressed a disinclination to leave Edinburgh, where her favourite minister resided, and where she yet hoped to see Helen. Her manner became, afterwards, somewhat changed; she turned more irritable in her temper, and her griefs imparted a stronger tinge of religious enthusiasm to her mind, giving her ground to believe that, as the Lord chasteneth them whom he loveth, she was smarting under the rod of the Almighty for a brief season.

It was, in the meantime, generally surmised, that Alexander Hamilton had poor Helen under his protection in some secret part of Edinburgh. He proceeded to advance in his profession, and soon became an advocate-depute; but he continued in the progress of his vice, and even carried, it was said, his rancorous and vindictive feelings into the sacred precincts of Astræa's dominions, tainting the fountains of justice by personal interests, and whimsical partialities and antipathies.

One day, when passing along the Pleasance, Hamilton was observed by Betty Walker, who—having resolved upon some mode of discovering Helen, and in an evil hour fixed upon the purpose of following her seducer—ran as fast as her poor aged limbs would allow, in the direction which he had taken hoping, in this way, to find out the place of Helen'

retreat. On this occasion she was unable to keep pace with Hamilton, and lost him as he turned up a cross lane running off from the main street of the Pleasance; but she resolved to persevere in her endeavours, and, at the same hour, next day, watched again, and upon seeing him pass, again followed him. This she repeated several times, not without being observed by Hamilton, who always quickened his pace and evaded her. Foiled in this way, Betty lost her usual calmness of temper; and having come out and met Hamilton, as he was passing along, her indignation completely mastered her, and on the public streets she upbraided him, and charged him with the seduction of Helen Morton. A crowd was immediately collected, which formed some impediment to Hamilton's progress, and Betty proceeded with her charge, getting more enthusiastic in her progress as her feelings warmed.

"Oh, that Edinburgh should stand quietly by," she ejaculated, looking as the ancient Pythia might be supposed to have done, "and see the sin of man flourishing like a bay tree, with its stem uncut and its leaves green. O thou sword of the Lord, how long will it be ere thou be unsheathed! Is the fire o' thy wrath, complained of by Jeremiah, when he asked ye to go into your scabbard, to rest and be still, quenched in sic times as this, whan the king's advocat seduces the dochters o' Israel, and is mair deserving o' your edge than the Philistines, the remnant o' the country o' Caphtor? Gie me up my bairn, wham ye hae stolen, like a thief o' the nicht, or I will mak a wailing like the dragons, and a mourning as the owls. Hauld him, hauld him, till he confess whar he has carried her, and secreted her from the eye o' her wha has been commissioned to guard and preserve her."

As Betty concluded her exclamation, she beat her forehead with her left hand, and held up the long spiked staff which she bore in her right. The crowd gazed; and one person, who knew the story and sympathised with her, laid hands on Hamilton, who struck him to the ground and escaped. There was now a general uproar. The friends of the person who was struck, raised a yell, and a hue and cry was got up after Hamilton, who, as he passed down the south back of the Canongate, heard the crowd pursuing him, like a pack of hounds.

This affair struck deep into Hamilton's mind. He saw that he was destined to be followed by this woman, like Orestes by the Furies, though how different the cause and the object! and he set to work in devising some method of wreaking his vengeance on the poor creature, and, at the same time, getting quit of her. In this he justified the prolific character of Revenge, in devising the means of her gratification. He knew the story of the exchange of the children, and that some floating suspicions still attached to Betty Walker, who, in consequence of her enthusiasm, was alleged to have been guilty of calling in the aid of the author of evil, to assist her in accomplishing her object. Her appearance had latterly become more like that of the "wise woman;" for grief and age had sharpened her features, and she leant her attenuated and bony figure on a long staff. Her exaggerated and unusual affection for the girl was also remarkable; and the disappearance of Helen was as extraordinary as her first entrance into the house of Richard Morton. Out of these materials, the depute-advocate could frame a plausible indictment for witchcraft, and he resolved to bring his enemy to the stake.

Previous to giving out this intention, he bribed some of Betty's neighbours, to circulate additional stories of her imputed sorcery. The moment that the suspicions of the public of that day were roused against a supposed trafficker in the black art, every misfortune that occurred in the neighbourhood was laid to her charge, and the poor victim was bound to the affiliation, as religiously as if she had been the true author. One person was got to say, that every child he had, after Betty came to the Pleasance, died. Another was ready to swear, that he never had a cow that laboured under a distemper, until Betty came to her present residence; and many minor charges of bewitched churns, charmed cheese-presses, and enchanted ale-vats, poured in in abundance.

Hamilton now thought he might venture upon his charge. Betty Walker was seized and dragged to prison, and served with an indictment to stand her trial before the High Court of Justiciary, for the crime of witchcraft. The indictment set forth, that—"Whereas, the entering into a treaty, compact, or partnership with the wicked one, for the object, end, or purpose, of working any mischief, hurt, or hinderance to the inhabitants of this realm, or their guids, gear, cattle, nolt, or sheep, or ony ither of their guids, means, or effects, is a heinous crime, which ought to be punished with fire and faggot: that, nevertheless, Elizabeth or Betty Nisbet, otherwise Walker, relict of the deceased Gideon Walker, skipper in Kirkaldy, is guilty of the said hateful and abominable crime; at least the said Elizabeth or Betty Walker did, in virtue and by means of a treaty, compact, or copartnership with the wicked one, cause, on the 25th day of August 16—, the child of Richard Morton, dyer in the Luckenbooths, being a male child, to disappear, and to come and be present another child, being a female, in the place of the said male child: that the said Elizabeth or Betty Walker did, after the said female child, which was called Helen Morton, had resided with the said Richard Morton for a period of eighteen years, cause her, still by the said nefarious power of witchcraft, to disappear, and she has not since been heard of; moreover, the said Elizabeth or Betty Walker has produced, by the said wicked art, meikle wraith and misfortune in her neighbourhood, in sae meikle as, Thomas Adam's cow died on the 19th day of May last, and three children of John Baxter died within a week of each ither; besides many other devilish freiks and tricks which she has played off against the guids and effects of her neighbours; at least the said Elizabeth or Betty Walker has been guilty, art and part, of these crimes, and she ought to suffer the pains of death, by fire and faggot, as a terror to others to do the like in time coming.'

When this paper was served on poor Betty, she knew at once from whom it emanated. Strong in her faith, and trusting to the power of a good God to deliver her from all the machinations of her enemies, she retained all the calmness so remarkably produced by the upholding influences of a religion superior to all others in this effect. Her first act was to pray to the Almighty for a holy resignation to His will, whatever might be the issue of the terrible trial she had to undergo, declaring her readiness to expiate, by the threatened fire, all the sins done in the body, if it was His will that she should be thus condemned for what she was innocent of, having no authority to investigate the wonder of His ways, and no power to penetrate into their awful secrets, but being bound to wait the manifestation of His will with patience and resignation. "And, oh!" she ended, in the words of Tobit, "deal with me as seemeth best unto Thee, and command my spirit to be taken from me, that I may be dissolved, and become earth; for it is profitable for me to die rather than to live, because I have heard false reproaches, and have much sorrow. Command, therefore, that I may now be delivered out of this distress; turn not thy face away from me."

When Robert Walker heard of the circumstance of his mother having been served with an indictment for sorcery, he was so overpowered with the fearful nature of the intelligence, that it was some time before he was able either to give utterance to his grief, or prepare for visiting his unfortunate parent. Having taken some restorative, he hurried away, as fast as the shock he had received would allow, to give what consolation he could to her in her affliction.

On arriving in Edinburgh, he found he could not get into the prison that night, and must wait till the next day at one o'clock.

The sight of his mother, whom he had regarded with the most tender filial interest, lying on a bed of straw in the corner of a cold cell, under such circumstances of danger, and exposed to a prejudice which, in those days, was like a withering curse or the spotted plague, bringing death, and shutting out sympathy, the only consolation of the wretched, he flew to her, and, throwing his arms round her neck, wept and sobbed like a child. The recollection of former times came over him, and he saw her, a woman honoured and revered—a pattern of every godly excellence—beloved by her husband—worshipped by her son, whose only aim was to do good, and only fear to do evil—about to perish on a flaming pile amidst the yells of an infuriated populace, excited, by the powers of prejudice and hatred, to the frenzy of demons. He continued to hang round her neck—the sobs of his bursting heart echoed through the cell—and it was only by the calm expostulations of his parent that he could be made to sit down beside her and endeavour to moderate his grief

"Robin, Robin," said Betty, "the son should love his mother, but he shouldna forget that she who beareth cometh after the Lord. Think that our enemy, Alexander Hamilton, wha has sown this evil, is but an instrument—the harvest may be the death o' ane whase ear is ripe, but the reapers will be angels."

"Ah! my dear mother," cried Robert, still sobbing with the intensity of his agony, "I cautioned ye against interfering wi' the fierce ways o' that man. Oh, that ye had but taen, for ance, an advice frae him wha has received sae mony wise admonitions from yoursel!"

"Dinna repine, Robin," said Betty calmly. "It was to do—it was to do—and it is dune. I hae had mony sorrows. When your father's garments were given to me, without his body, I was in sorrow. When I was in travail, I was in sorrow, because my hour was come. When I was delivered o' ye, I still remembered my anguish, forI saw ye the image o' a dead father. When I saw Helen Morton lying in the cradle of anither bairn, I was in sorrow for the anguish of parents wha had lost their only child. I reared her in sorrow; for I thought I was made an instrument for a dim purpose, which was fulfilled darkly by her backsliding, her ruin, and her flight. And I am in sorrow this day, no because the sickle is hanging ower the ripe stalk, but because my son is impatient o' the ways o' God. Let Alexander Hamilton follow his courses. There is Another greater than he, wha, when the wind pointeth as blowing to the east, can make the vessel sail to the west; and wha, when there is nae wind in the heavens, can winnow the corn and drive the chaff before Him, even as He does the wicked. Leave me now, my dear Robin, for a part o' my battle is still to fight, and there is naething on earth that can be a help to me in this day o' my adversity."

Robert—whose mind, amidst the religious, and to him desponding sentiments of his mother, was occupied with schemes for her safety—asked her for a copy of her indictment. He read it in the intervals of his grief; and, having again kissed her, he left the jail.

The trial of Betty was hurried on with most indecent speed. The court having met, she was placed at the bar, exhibiting the mere wreck of a human being, and more like a person raised from the grave than one who had a life to lose. The usual forms were gone through, and the questions of guilty or not guilty put and answered. The depute, Hamilton, then addressed the court:—

"My Lords, and Gentlemen of the Jury,—In these times, when the power of the devil is seen in diverse places, working through the instrumentality of old hags, who, being done with the pleasures of life, and stung with envy that others should, in their turn, enjoy what they are no longer permitted to taste, it is necessary that the conservators of the public good should exercise their power and functions with adequate and salutary vigour. For, from the time of Asmodeus, who killed the seven husbands of the daughter of Raguel, there hath not occurred a time when there was more need to substitute for the smoke of the heart and liver of the fish of Tobias, the smoke of the heart of those who make a covenant with the devil, wherein we only obey the word of God, which saith, that he resolved to banish all manner of witchcraft from the earth. No crime is half so heinous in its nature as this. It is rebellion against God, and worketh mischief to man; and seeing that the power of the Apostles, in casting out unclean spirits, is denied to us, what can we do to save our country from being overrun with all manner of mischief, deaths, and burnings, exchanges of children, destruction to goods and gear, and a universal overturn of the laws of nature, but to burn the unclean spirit and the body together? In exerting the king's authority in this matter, who himself has said, in reference to witches, that no sex, no age, and no station should be spared, I conceive that I am serving God, the king, and my country; and in such a cause to allow the heart to melt, because of the cruelty of the death, is to sacrifice the best interests of the kingdom to that which concerneth only a weak and womanish spirit. The prisoner at the bar is one of the worst of her unclean kind; she has been guilty, as I shall prove to your lordships, of diverse unholy traffickings with the evil one. About eighteen years ago, when Richard Morton and his wife were walking in the Meadows, having unguardedly left their child in the power of this woman, they found, on their return, that it had been spirited away, and another child, of a different sex, substituted in its place. This was the doing of the prisoner at the bar, who was sitting with a book of incantations before her at the very time the circumstance happened. She afterwards exercised the power of her charms on the child, who, though nursed by Mrs Morton, never shewed any regard for her, but always clung to the prisoner with the force of an affection which could be produced by nothing but magic. Nor was it possible to separate the two; for when her son, Robert Walker, wished to free her from her servile condition, by furnishing her with the means of a livelihood, she rejected the offer, choosing rather to be a slave, with the power of ruling the destiny of the charmed girl, than follow the dictates of our common nature in being free. Her power over Helen Morton continued till she was eighteen years of age, when the girl, having exhibited some indications of a wish to get quit of the thraldom of magic tyranny, by following the impulse of her natural spirit, and falling in love, this abominable woman again spirited her away, no doubt to the place from whence she was brought—for she disappeared of a sudden, and no person could tell whither she had gone, whereby Richard Morton and his wife have, a second time, lost their child. As soon as the prisoner had thus spirited away the girl, she, conscious of her guilt, left the house of Richard Morton, and went to reside in the Pleasance, where she continued to practise her abominable art."

The advocate then went into a narrative of some extravagant circumstances, regarding the death of the children and cow mentioned in the indictment, and concluded by asking a verdict of guilty against the prisoner at the bar.

A number of witnesses were examined, among whom were Richard Morton and his wife, who gave an unwilling testimony in regard to the loss of the child, and some other circumstances. He believed Betty to be innocent, and suspected Hamilton of having seduced Helen; but they were not asked, and were not permitted to say anything beyond an answer to the subtle questions put to them. Several bribed witnesses gave the most extravagant accounts of Betty's alleged practices in the Pleasance, which seemed to

weigh less with the court and jury than the facts which were to some extent true regarding the mysterious story of Helen Morton. The proof having been closed, the judge charged the jury unfavourably to the prisoner, and every circumstance seemed to conspire in a consignment of Betty to the stake. Many of her friends were melted to tears, and Gideon Henderson's long raw form was extended to its utmost length, his arms held out to heaven, and his lank leathery cheeks moistened with the tears of his labouring spirit. Richard Morton and his wife wrung their hands in agony, and many groans of sympathy resounded in low deep sounds throughout the court.

Just as the judge ended his speech, Robert Walker was seen to force his way through the crowd. He seemed overcome with violent exercise and grief, for he staggered through physical exhaustion. His head was uncovered, and his hair was so wet with perspiration, that it lay round his temples like a wet mat. His eye was swoln and inflamed, his mouth parched and open, as if gasping for air. He held by the hand an old woman, upwards of eighty years of age, whose thin clayey cheeks bespoke the colour of the ground. Her eye lacked the lustre of life, and her limbs seemed to sustain her only as one last desperate effort. Robert Walker pulled her forward with a violence which seemed to shake from her body the lingering spark by which it was animated. On coming near the bar, he pushed her forward, holding up, in mute eloquence, his hands, to procure for her a hearing. This woman was Lizzy Gilchrist, Sir David Hamilton's old servant. The silence of death now reigned as she held up her long bony fingers, and opened her lips to address the court.

"Is it Betty Walker wha is here arraigned for changing Richard Morton's bairn?" began the old woman in a breathless voice. "And wha arraigns her? Is it Sandy Hamilton whom I hae dandled sae aft on my auld knees? Eh! tell me if it is sae, that, before I gang hame to my appointed place, I may save an innocent life, do justice to an ill-used bairn, bring down confusion on a villain, and disburden my heavy heart o' a great crime. Wha was it, think ye, ye men o' the law, wha are sae wise in your folly, and sae foolish in your wisdom, that changed bonny Helen Morton for Sandy Hamilton? Is Sandy here in the court this day? Let me see him, that I may try to find in his face the lines of Richard Morton. Wae's me, that for worlds gear, Lizzy Gilchrist should hae consented to be the instrument o' puttin' Helen Morton, Sir David Hamilton's bairn, into Richard Morton's cradle, and tuen therefrae Sandy Hamilton. But sae it was. I was forced to do it; for they bribed me wi' siller, and tauld me that Eskdale wouldna be left to the family, unless there was a male-heir born o' the house o' Hamilton; and sae I did a deed whilk has been a burden to my conscience for mony a day. I tried a' that lay in my power to keep Sandy Hamilton frae Helen Morton, but it availed not; and often, whan I saw the twa thegither, I thought that He wha rules and sees a' was working out o' our crimes an awfu' retribution. But, whan I heard that puir Betty Walker was like to dree the punishment of my crime, I hurried aff, albeit my limbs are mair suited to the rest o' the grave, to save the life o' a godly woman, and heap shame on the head o' a villain. Sandy Hamilton, whar are ye?—let me see the son o' the dyer. And Helen Morton, come forth, that I may see in your blue een the light o' the Hamiltons o' Redcastle."

As she finished her speech, Lizzy looked round for those she asked for; but her dim eyes could not have observed them, even if they had been close to her. She turned from the court; and, as she was retiring, Helen Morton rushed in, and with a wild look, inquired for Betty Walker. As soon as she saw her, she fell upon her neck, hugged her, and wept so loud that the people in the court heard her. A deep emotion was felt, even by the judges, in witnessing this extraordinary scene. Recovering herself, Helen started up and cried—

"Now am I free frae the toils of a seducer. Can it be borne in a free land, that there is nae safety to peaceful people, from the designs o' powerful men? Alexander Hamilton courted me, with a design to ruin me; but, fortified by the admonition o' the woman he has branded as a sorcerer, I was enabled to resist him. Finding his attempts to seduce me vain, he carried me off by force, to a house two miles removed frae Edinburgh, whar he put me under the power of ane o' his ain kind; but my keeper's heart relented, whan he heard o' the trials o' Betty; an' I am come here this day, to bear testimony in her favour. She was my first, my best, my only frien', and I wad gladly dee to save her precious life."

And Helen Morton again embraced Betty.

The jury were now satisfied of the innocence of Betty, and of the guilt of Hamilton. They returned a verdict of not guilty, which was received by the crowd with loud cheers; and Betty Walker, Robert, and Helen, went home in joy.

The discovery made by Lizzy Gilchrist was quickly made available. A brieve was procured for serving Helen Morton heir to Sir David Hamilton, who died about this time. Alexander Hamilton brought a competing brieve, which was not successful, and retired to the Continent in disgrace. Helen Morton changed her name to the family name of Hamilton, got possession of the property of Eskdale, (for Sir David's property had been disposed of by him,) and afterwards married Robert Walker. They and Betty retired to Eskdale to live, where they enjoyed many happy years of virtue and innocence.

THE CHASE

A PASSAGE FROM THE HISTORY OF THE REBELLION.

Many of the Maxwells of Galloway were out in the forty-five, and, after the disaster which put an end to the Stuart cause for ever, few felt more severely the royal displeasure than the catholics of the stewartry. The last of the Maxwells of Orchardtown, in that district, having fought with desperate courage in the ranks of the Pretender, was pursued by the king's troops with the sanguinary spirit of blood-hounds. His activity and knowledge of the country afforded him, however, advantages which set for a long time at defiance all the efforts of his pursuers; but the hardships he encountered, and the privations he suffered, purchased, at a high price, the short respite his ingenuity gained from a melancholy fate.

Maxwell observed that his companions in misfortune generally fled as far as possible from their respective counties, conceiving that the investigations of the soldiers would be directed, in the first instance, to the places of their abode. This, it is well known, was a great error; for the seizures of the fugitives that took place were much more frequently the consequence of the unfriendly character of the persons who concealed them, and who had little interest in their security, than any suspicions of the soldiers directed to localities. Taking advantage of that error, Maxwell went direct to the parish of Urr, where he knew there were many catholics who would lay down their lives for his salvation.

Clothed in the garb of a common labourer, the proprietor of the large estates of Orchardtown hastened his progress to the place of his hope. It was late at night when he arrived at the little, but beautiful village of Dalbeatie, situated on the banks of the angry Urr. He was in a state of great

exhaustion, as well as of solicitude—fear he knew not—for he had heard, at several periods, behind him, the tread of horses, which his heated imagination at once converted into those of troopers. Taking no time to select a dwelling of a catholic, he ran up to the nearest door that presented itself; and, lifting the latch, stood before an old woman, who sat at a clear crackling fire, smoking a short cutty pipe, as black as the cat that sat on her knee, and reading her Bible. There was nothing for it but to dash at once into the question, whether she was catholic or protestant.

"A very odd question that, in these strange times," answered the old woman, "and ane I'm no inclined to answer, till I am informed what use ye intend to mak o't."

"I am a fugitive from the king's troops," said Maxwell, "and claim the protection of a Christian, whether of the one persuasion or the other."

"And that ye shall hae," answered the woman, with briskness; "but only upon ae condition."

"What is that?" said Maxwell.

"It is just that ye dinna ask me to deny you," answered the old woman; "ye hae my house at your command, and everything in it that may assist ye in concealing yersel' frae Geordie's hounds, except my conscience."

At this moment, Maxwell thought he heard the sound of the troopers, and taking advantage of the qualified consent of the old woman, stept forward, with a view to explore the recesses of the humble apartment. His first resolution was to get beneath the bed; but that was objected to by the old woman as unwise, for, as she remarked, that was the very first place his pursuers would likely search. The quickness of the woman vindicated the superiority of her sex, in devising expedients.

"Tak that ladder and mount up to the skylight," she cried; "open it, and try if it is big enough to let your body out. The roof o' the house is the safest place *in* it. Ye can lie there and crack to me through the window, and maybe I may hand ye up something to cheer your sorrowfu' heart."

The idea was excellent. Maxwell immediately mounted, got out at the skylight, and, laying his body along the thatched roof, looked down upon his conditional protectress with gratitude.

"Now," said the old woman, "I can safely say ye're no *in* my house. Dinna ye see how meikle we women hae improved, sin' the days o' our common mither, wha, if she had had but a tenth pairt o' the wit o' her dochters, might easily hae saved us frae the burden o' our original sin. Dinna ye see, that I can, by denying your being in my house, save ane o' my ain faith and my conscience, at the same time."

Maxwell saw the importance of the judaical construction which the woman was inclined to put upon her answer, and it cheered his drooping spirits;—but he suspected the possibility of the soldiers putting such a question as would place the old woman's conscience, whose sensibility might outstrip the ingenuity of her mind, as well as himself, in jeopardy; and he therefore endeavoured to prevail upon her to give up all her scruples, and deny him out and out. Putting his hands to the sides of his mouth to prevent the sound from escaping outwardly, and direct it down into the house, he said—

"I suppose you are well acquainted with your Bible; and no doubt it is from that precious volume that you draw your reasons for not denying me to the soldiers. But, if I recollect rightly, there is no express commandment against telling a white lie to save a friend; for the ninth only forbids the bearing of false witness *against* our neighbour, and I am only asking you to say a word against truth *for* a friend."

"And a gude friend, in troth," replied the woman, "ye are, to come and sit on my roof and try to persuade me that a lee is no forbidden in the Bible. Did ye never read that Ananias, and Sapphira his wife, were both, by the vengeance of the Almighty, struck dead for telling a lee, far whiter in its complexion than what ye sae cunningly would hae me to tell."

Caught by the biblical lore of the woman, Maxwell changed his tactics, and endeavoured to maintain, that, although lies were forbidden, there were some instances where they were permitted.

"You are right, my good lady," rejoined Maxwell, "but you must admit that, in some cases, even on Bible authority, the end justifies the means, and untruths have, for certain purposes, been permitted. It is, moreover, very remarkable, that you women have been selected, in preference to us men, as the agents in those instances where lies are permitted in Scripture."

"I dinna like flattery," interrupted the woman, with a quaint coquetish tone.

"For you are aware," continued Maxwell, "that Rahab received and concealed the two spies sent from Shittim, and denied that she had seen them; and Rachel sat upon the images, and said to her father, who searched for the same, that she could not rise up, and therefore denied that she had taken them."

"Ay, and there is anither instance ye micht hae mentioned," said the woman; "but I'm no sic a fule as tell ye what it is; for I think it is mair against my sex than the cases that hae enabled ye to pour down sae meikle abuse on us, wha are the very fountains o' mankind. But a' thae lees werena justified, freend, nae mair than were those tauld by Peter and Abraham."

This opposition on the part of the woman disconcerted Maxwell greatly; for at that very moment the whole village was disturbed by the noise of the soldiers, who had arrived and were searching every house in it. He, therefore, clung to the concession already made by the woman, reminded her that he was not *in* her house, and suggested the improbability of any question being put as to his being *on* it.

In a little time the door opened, and Maxwell could see without being discovered, the men who were thirsting for his blood, at least for the reward which the spilling of it would yield them, enter the house, and search every corner of it for himself. They repeatedly asked the woman if she had any person secreted in it. To this she uniformly answered "No."

"Art thou sure, old lady," said the Lieutenant of the company, "that thou hast no man secreted in thy house."

"Sure am I o' that," replied she; "and, for the truth o' what I say, I can appeal to a' abune," giving a wink to Maxwell, who trembled for her bold indiscretion.

"But hast thou not this day seen Maxwell of Orchardtown, the king's outlaw, or heard of him, or suspect where he is or has been?"

"I hae seen nae man wham I kenned to be Maxwell o' Orchardtown," replied the close-sailing casuist.

After searching the house, the men departed, but the noise in the village still continued. Maxwell felicitated himself on his escape; and the good woman proposed to give her guest some porridge, provided she could devise any means of getting them up to him, being unable to mount the ladder. This difficulty was overcome by throwing a string up to Maxwell, who held the one end of it, while the old woman tied the other to the dish. A good warm supper of our national meal assuaged the pangs of a two days' hunger, and the dauntless feaster enjoyed, in the very midst of an uproar produced by the baying of blood-hounds tracking his course, that humble dish, with all the relish of a professor of gourmandize picking the bones of an ortolan.

While the noise in the village continued, Maxwell could not move. The fatigues of the day had produced a lassitude, which soon lulled him to sleep. As he was gently fall-

ing into the arms of the drowsy god, he heard the old woman offering up, with the greatest devotion, a prayer for his safety. Never did religion appear to him so fascinating. The Castle of Orchardtown, with all its grandeur, never presented to him a scene so full of picturesque beauty, as this poor old woman in her little mud hut, addressing the Almighty in her own simple terms, speaking the language of the heart, and breathing the uncontaminated aspirations of a contrite spirit. Far less did ever anything occur there to fill his heart with so engrossing an interest. A stranger, unseen by her before, unknown to her, and liable to be suspected by her, formed the subject of her devotional thanks and her humble petitions—and that person was in the lion's mouth—an outlaw—proscribed by his king, and in the power of a poor old woman—exposed to every privation, lying on a house top, and denied a vision of the faintest ray of the rainbow of hope. In the devotional contemplation of this subject, and with such feelings of satisfaction, the persecuted owner of thousands lay down and slept on a roof of thatch.

A little before dawn, Maxwell awoke. The sounds of the horsemen had ceased, and as yet the inhabitants were asleep. He cried down to the old woman that it was time he was off to the woods, where he knew a cave which would afford him secure shelter during the day. His protectress requested him to remain until he got something to eat; and, with all the expedition in her power, proceeded to get something prepared for him. While engaged in this occupation, the door opened, and a neighbour entered, requesting a light wherewith to kindle her fire. Ignorant of the ingress of this visiter, Maxwell asked, through the sky-light, if his breakfast was yet ready; and the woman, who was in the act of lighting her peat, alarmed and terrified at the supernatural voice coming from above, flew out of the house, with the burning torch in her hand, exclaiming that the devil was in the house of Betty Gordon, who was busy making his porridge. It was yet dark, and the woman's high tones—for she was truly alarmed—with the unusual appearance of a lighted torch flaming in the street, roused the troopers, who had taken up their quarters in the village for the night.

The sounds of the collecting soldiers commenced—the supposed devil was sagaciously thought to be the object of their search; and they hurried to the house. Maxwell, however, had seen his danger, and, coming down from his hiding place by the back part of the house, crossed the Urr, and flew with the greatest speed down to the Solway. The soldiers repeated their search. Everything was examined, and one of them taking up the dish out of which Maxwell had taken his supper, and to which the string was still attached, held it up to his companions, as an evidence that the object of their search had been on the roof of the house. As he held up the dish something fell out of it, which, on being examined, was found to be a diamond ring, which the gratitude of the unhappy outlaw had induced him to give, in this delicate manner, to his protectress. The valuable trinket was immediately laid hold of by the officer of the company, who, placing it on his finger, held it up, and asked how an outlaw's ring looked on a loyal hand. Betty vindicated her right to the ring, with all her powers of oratory, but to no purpose. The only reply she got was, that, if she did not remain quiet, she would be removed to Dumfries, and punished for harbouring a traitor. The critical accuracy of this charge appearing to Betty to be exceedingly doubtful, she defied the officer to his proof, arguing, with considerable show of reason, and in her own particular style, that as, even by his own allegation, the fugitive had lain on the top of her house, she could not be said to have harboured him, any more than she did the rooks, who often selected her roof to sit on, and caw their omens over the village. She would not go the length of denying that he had been there; for she found her conscience had now taken up the case, and casuistry had little effect on that sturdy champion of the cause of truth.

Being able to procure no trace from Betty, of the direction the fugitive had taken, the soldiers betook themselves to a chance pursuit, which turned out to be well scented; for Maxwell soon heard his relentless pursuers at his heels. It was now grey dawn, and he had got to the water's edge The sounds approached nearer and nearer to him, and his choice seemed to lie between fire and water. Impelled by the keen spur of the fellest necessity, he sprung into the water; and just as he had waded as far as to cover all his body excepting his head which, in the dawn, could not be distinguished, he saw the company of troopers dash at full speed along the edge of the bank. So near were they, that he heard them mention his name, and could easily learn, from their conversation, that they had secured the ring which he had meant as a reward to the poor old woman who had treated him so kindly.

Maxwell now took his course by Castle Gower, running at the top of his now diminished speed, and producing, in the intensity of his struggles for life, such a degree of heat throughout his body, that his wet clothes reeked. He presented thus an extraordinary appearance, and attracted attention. Though he avoided houses and sought the woods, he did not escape several people, who, struck with the figure of a man smoking like a kiln—out of breath and gasping, yet still toiling on—running and stopping, and running again, and his blood-shot eyes flaring around him, as he expected every moment that death was at his heels—concluded at once that he was a Jacobite flying for life. The circumstance went from mouth to mouth, till it reached the soldiers, who, making sure of the intelligence, turned and tracked their victim through every evolution which his knowledge of the country enabled him to make.

The race was unequal, so long as Maxwell was obliged to keep even ground; but he soon got to the thickets, and the troopers were obliged to dismount and follow him through the trees. He got now among the old woods of Munshes, striking up to the high ground as his best refuge. He was now, however, in the view of his pursuers, who, coming from off their horses, were comparatively fresh and able for the pursuit. With drawn swords in their hands, which glittered with a fearful brightness amidst the dark green leaves of the old oaks, they dashed on, and poor Maxwell saw, with dismay, that his career was finished.

Providence, how strange are thy ways! At the very moment when Maxwell thought himself about to resign his life, he fell headlong into a cleft of an old quarry, which had been opened, on the lands of Barchan, by the old Maxwell of Munshes, who married the heiress of Tinwald. There he lay senseless and motionless, as much beyond the fear of his foes as if he had got a free pardon; but his relief was the insensibility of a swoon; and when he recovered his senses, he heard the whoop of the soldiers dying away in the distance. They had passed over him, continuing their course, in the belief that he had doubled a corner of the rock, and proceeded in the direction of the river.

In this situation, Maxwell considered what course he should now take. He conceived himself unsafe where he lay, for he knew that the moment the soldiers cleared the woods and saw no trace of him beyond, they would return and search for the place where he lay, and, in all probability, find him. The thought of dying in a cave, without room for the play of his arms, like a badger baited by terriers, suited not the taste of Maxwell, who was determined to sell his life at a dear price. Climbing out of the cave, he made again for the Solway, in the expectation of getting into a boat, which, as he passed before, he saw lying on its banks. This expectation did not fail him—the boat was still there—in he vaulted, and, taking the oars into his hands, pulled away with all his strength.

In a short time he had got a considerable distance from shore and conceiving himself now safe, at least, for a time,

the energies which the instinctive love of life had called up, suddenly failed, and he lay down in the bottom of the boat in a state of exhaustion approaching to inanity. The novelty, if not the danger of his situation, had no power sufficient to rouse his torpid faculties—a cataleptic influence seized every fibre of his body, and an incubus of fearful weight pressed upon him, while his imagination wandered, and dreams of battles and blood came over him, producing convulsive starts and deep groans.

A dawning sense of the danger of his situation at length beamed on his reviving imagination, but, even after he was aware of the true nature of his condition—at sea in an open boat—his exhausted limbs denied their office, and he remained for some time in that situation, which is so often experienced in dreams, when the mind is awake to a supposed danger, but the energies of safety are asleep. When he fully recovered his faculties, and looked up and around him, he discovered that he had drifted, with a receding tide, far down the Solway, and that an easterly wind was beginning to ruffle the waves, and impel the boat faster in its course. A new danger now threatened him. The wind was fast increasing in intensity, the boat was clearly in full speed for the ocean, and he perceived, with dismay, that he had escaped from a death on land, to be swallowed up in the waves of the Atlantic.

The horrors of this apprehension did not, however, prevent Maxwell from using the powers the Almighty had still left him, with a view to save his life; but all his energies did not suffice to enable him to dispute space with the dire enemies he had now to contend with. He was now beyond the sight of land—a deep fog surrounded him on all sides—the wind howled, and the waves lashed round the small boat, as if they demanded the craft to resign their victim. Maxwell continued to pull with his utmost power, but his efforts only made more evident the insurmountable strength of the angry spirit of the incipient storm; yet still he toiled, determined to die at the oar rather than resign the last flickering hope, that gilded, with its faint beam, the verge of his imagination.

Some hours passed in this dreadful struggle, and nature was again exhausted. His arms became weak and palsied, and the oars fell from his grasp into the sea, carrying with them the last hope of life. Resigned, at last, to a fate which he had so often and so narrowly escaped—death, so terrible, even in its mildest aspect; but, when marshalled in, and surrounded by the dread furies that wait on the angry spirit of the storm, how indescribably awful!—Maxwell looked silently and sadly over the boiling waters, and waited his doom. So certain, so near, seemed to him that consummation of his woes, that he already conceived himself as no longer belonging to the living. The death of hope was the dissolution of his powers of perception; and his eye was already fixed on the ghastly forms which despair throws round its victim, as if in preparation for the final onset of the mighty king.

"Hallo!" thundered a stentorian voice in the ear of the entranced and already half-dead victim. Maxwell started to his feet, and beheld a boat alongside, with people endeavouring to throw grappling irons, to bind the boat in which he was to the welcome stranger. In a short time he was removed into the other boat; which, being supplied with sails, was, in a moment, in full flight for the land. Having recovered himself, he looked round, and saw sitting in the stern two of the king's troops, who had been sent off to secure him. "Again saved, and again consigned to death," he muttered to himself; and, folding his arms in his breast, he looked sternly at his foes.

The boat soon approached the land. Maxwell had been allowed to remain without manacles, for the violent motion of the boat rendered it impossible for the soldiers to fix them, and they reserved that duty till they should get into smooth water. The surf on the shore, however, rendered that operation more difficult than in the open sea; and a greater obstacle still remained, in the sickness of the soldiers, who, unaccustomed to such rough sailing, hung over the gunwale, and vomited into the sea. On reaching the land, the boat struck violently on the beach, approaching and receding alternately, and producing great annoyance to the sick men, who, Maxwell observed, were totally unable to bind or guard him, while the sailors seemed to concern themselves very little as to whether he remained or escaped. Taking advantage of this favourable state of matters, he plunged into the sea, and, in a few minutes, was on dry land.

On looking round him, he saw that he was landed near to the place from whence he had sailed; but no rest was yet in reserve for him. The remainder of the soldiers were on their way to the beach to meet their companions. He resolved to proceed again to the cave, and hastened with all the quickness in his power, that he might secrete himself before they came up. The beagles were, however, again at his heels, and the race was again for life. He soon reached the woods, and as darkness was fast closing in, he began to entertain a slight hope of ultimate escape. All was quiet, save the flutter of a few small birds. The wind had fallen, and the contrast which the scene now before him presented, to that he had witnessed so shortly before, was so remarkable, that he stood for a moment to contemplate it, and wept for the cause which had banished him from his domains, and filled his cup with such bitterness of sorrow. As he dashed the tears from his eyes, on resuming his race, the sounds of the soldiers were again recognised by him; and, on turning round, he saw them at no great distance, while he was yet a considerable way from the cave. The advantage they had over him, by being fresh and vigorous, soon became manifest. They gained upon him at every step, and he was now in the same danger as when formerly Providence snatched him from his enemies and hurried him under the ground. It was now impossible to reach the quarry. The eyes of the soldiers were fixed upon him, as if determined that he should not again escape, and he now finally resolved to take his stand. Determined to die rather than yield, he placed his back against an oak, and waited the coming of his foes. The sergeant of the company had been considerably a-head of his companions during the chase, and came up to the desperate man alone. He fell in an instant, shot by a concealed pistol which Maxwell drew from his pocket; and his sword was immediately seized, to enable his victor to barter his life for as many of the lives of his persecutors as he could secure. The conflict was short but terrible. Three men fell by the hand of Maxwell, and he resigned his life, covered with many wounds

The body of the unfortunate but brave heir of Orchardtown was taken first to Dalbeatie. Betty Gordon requested that, till it was otherwise disposed of, it might lie in her house. The request was not denied; and many people, having heard of the brave manner in which he had met his fate, assembled to see the remains of a man who exhibited on his person no fewer than fifteen sabre cuts. The Spartan mothers would in vain have augured, from the position of his wounds, that he died with his back to his foes. A safer construction would have been, that his death was doubly glorious; for he gave his breast to his enemies, and his defenceless back received only those wounds which that could not contain.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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Wilson, John Mackay
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